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***POPULARIZING FEMINISM:
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF
BRITISH AND TURKISH WOMEN'S MAGAZINES***

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DECLARATION

I have presented the following three papers which have arisen from my work on the thesis at Cultural Studies conferences.

1- 'Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture: Reading Beauty Advertisements in Women's Magazines'. Presented at the Crossing the Boundaries: Cultural Studies in the UK and US conference, Izmir Turkey. Published in the conference proceedings, 1997.

2- 'A Comparative Approach to Studying Contemporary Feminist Thought in Britain and Turkey'. Presented at the Cross-Cultural Challenges conference, Zagreb, Croatia. Published in the conference proceedings, 1998.

3- 'Popular Culture: From being an Enemy of the "Women's Movement" to a Tool for "Women's Liberation"?'. Presented at the Popular Cultures conference, Izmir, Turkey, 1998. To be published by the Journal of Popular Culture, America.

SUMMARY

This thesis is a comparative study of popularisation of feminism in Britain and Turkey in the 1990s. It focuses on selected British and Turkish women's magazines and examines the ways in which they engage with feminist concerns.

The methodology is derived from feminist critical theory and cultural studies in order to address the dynamic interchange between feminist politics and mainstream or consumer women's interests and to examine the relationship between the concepts of feminism and femininity in contemporary women's magazines. The significance of the research lies in the identification of ways in which these texts incorporate and appropriate feminist discourses to the extent that the notion of femininity has increasingly come to be associated with feminist thought. The argument presented in this study is that the relationship between the producers of cultural texts and feminism, and producers and readers need to be taken into consideration to investigate how gendered subjectivities are reproduced in any given culture or cross-culturally, by whom they are reproduced, in whose interests they work, and how they are constructed. This approach to popular culture will provide tools to articulate the political and cultural identities of women.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. In the first, I discuss the evolution of feminist movements in the different historical and cultural contexts of Britain and Turkey by focusing on current feminist debates. The second chapter examines the women's magazine as a diverse form of popular culture with regard to its market and content. Contemporary women's magazine markets in these two countries and the ways in which these markets have been changed and expanded in conjunction with the development of feminist movements over the last two decades are discussed. This chapter also discusses the role of editors in defining a contemporary understanding of femininity for mass consumption and the editorial control of the magazine form as a commodity. The final chapter examines the dominant themes through which these texts have engaged with feminist issues. By comparing and contrasting the Turkish and British women's magazines I have found that specific conditions and politics engender a variety of diverse forms for the popularisation of feminism. Feminist themes and issues embedded in popular and commercial discourses are complex and various. However, I have found that the Turkish women's magazines primarily provide an outlet for women's voices and share a common goal with feminist politics of promoting female empowerment in the context of 1990s' Turkey. On the other hand, feminism is predominantly recognized as a cultural value by the British women's magazines in which feminism is often redefined through commodities and fetishized into a symbol of things. Their approach is defined as postfeminist which means the incorporation, revision and depoliticisation of feminist politics.

INTRODUCTION:

FEMINISM, FEMININITY AND WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

This thesis examines the popularisation of feminism in the 1990s comparatively in Britain and Turkey through a consideration of the engagement of women's popular magazines with feminism. The term 'feminism' has undergone a massive epistemological transformation since the women's liberation movement of the 1960s. A number of changes occurring over the last thirty years have had an impact on what feminism is today. Firstly, the subject of feminism has largely changed to incorporate a younger generation. Secondly, feminism itself has changed as criticism and conflicting subject-positions within feminism emerged such as lesbian, black etc. Finally, the society within which feminism exists has undergone dramatic changes. Feminism has become a more complicated and vaguer term than ever, since it might be used to refer to an approach, a political position or a way of living. However, all these changes in the development of feminist thought have taken place at different times and levels in different cultural contexts that are shaped by a specific configuration of social and political forces. Thus, this thesis explores the conditions of the development of feminisms and cultural dynamics specific to the countries in question, and furthermore what the engagement of women's magazines with feminism means for contemporary feminist thought in Britain and Turkey.

The term 'feminism' may seem unambiguous at first glance, yet it has different associations, meanings, resonances and political consequences in different contexts, especially in distinct socio-historical locations like the West and the non-West. In

spite of diverse definitions and practices articulated in any given culture as well as cross-culturally, feminism ‘articulates the particular form in which women in specific social settings are defined and oppressed’¹. The Western experience of feminism has provided an important reference point and a framework for feminist debates in different cultural contexts.²

Despite the specific cultural and social settings, I will be arguing that feminist thought and feminist scholarship in Britain and Turkey have been following parallel and partially overlapping trajectories. Studies on women in Turkey suggest a selective incorporation of broader agendas generated by Anglo-American feminist criticism, alongside local debates firmly grounded in local historical and political specificities. For instance, movements for social reform and modernization in the early decades of the twentieth century established a lasting framework for discussions on the ‘woman question’ in Turkey. Thus nationalism was the leading idiom through which issues pertaining to women’s position in society were articulated. Diverse cultural experiences may fragment the vocabularies and terms of reference of feminist scholarship but comparative studies like this one provide a space for a two-way communication between cultures for the development of feminist research and politics. Cross-cultural comparison also enhances one’s awareness of his/her own

¹ Nükhet Sirman, ‘Feminism in Turkey: A Short History’, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 3(1), (Fall 1989), pp. 1-34, (p.2).

² However, it should be pointed out that the dominance of Western feminist theory and practice has created political and analytical confusion for many non-Western women. Some feminist scholars have highlighted the specificity of Third World women’s experiences and called into question the universalist approach of Western feminist theories, for example, see Chandra Mohanty, ‘Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses’, *Feminist Review*, 30, Autumn 1988, pp. 61-88; Elizabeth Spelman, *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought*, (Boston: Beacon, 1988).

culture and provides tools for a critical approach through which to study one's own culture.

Feminism as a social movement has tried to find ways of raising various issues in relation to women's oppression in the public sphere which is already occupied by other discourses that have engaged themselves one way or the other with feminist debates. The media have played a significant role in disseminating feminist ideas and politics over the last two decades but they have also added their own definition of feminism. In order to understand the various meanings feminism accumulated for women in contemporary culture and how these meanings have been created and reproduced I have turned to these cultural texts in the media where definitions are processed, contested and disseminated to a large audience. Media images help shape our view of the world and our values; they contribute to our perception of what it is to be a man and what it is to be a woman, how to dress, look and consume; how to conform to dominant cultural norms and so on. I have chosen to analyse a particular popular cultural form, the women's magazine, which is mainly written by, addressed to and consumed by women, in order to illustrate the dynamic interchange between feminist politics and what are accepted as mainstream women's interests. The women's magazine market has expanded and changed in conjunction with equally visible changes which have been observed in women's lives over the last three decades. As the women's magazine industry has profited from the new female market they have tended to adjust themselves accordingly. The problems and conflicts of young women, who have benefited from the rights women have gained in the last

thirty years, became subject matter for magazines, in particular the magazines analysed in this study.

While the feminist research carried out in the 1970s saw the girls' and women's magazines as exemplifying oppression, since the 1990s feminism has fragmented and given way to various feminisms, the opposition between feminism and femininity has been seen as something more fluid and something which is more challenging.³ The loosening of the opposition between feminism and femininity has been acknowledged by some feminist scholars who have argued for an important relation between feminism and the world of women's magazines.⁴ My study takes this approach to women's magazines and examines two British women's magazines, *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* and two Turkish women's magazines *Kim* and *Kadınca* to show how these magazines have facilitated feminism's engagement with the popular. I will discuss the methodology of the study in the last section of the Introduction.

The cultural studies approach to gender and media is taken in this study. In this view, media texts are seen as central sites in which negotiation over gender takes place, and in which contradictory cultural representations of gender are accommodated, modified, reconstructed and reproduced. Thus popular culture is viewed as a field of, as Stuart Hall maintains, both conflict and contestation. Hall argues that 'it is the arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where it is

³ See for example, Charlotte Brunsdon, 'Pedagogies of the Feminine: Feminist Teaching and Women's Genres', *Screen*, Vol. 32, 1991, pp. 364-82.

⁴ See for example Angela McRobbie, 'More! New Sexualities in Girls' and Women's Magazines', in *Back to Reality: Social Experience and Cultural Studies*, (ed.) Angela McRobbie, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 190-209.

secured'⁵. With reference to socialism he says 'it is not a sphere where socialism, a socialist culture might be simply "expressed". But it is one of the places where socialism might be constituted' (ibid.). It is possible to draw an analogy between socialism and feminism here. If this position is taken, then popular cultural forms appear significant for feminist analyses as they are involved intimately in producing and perpetuating the dominant meanings of the categories of man and woman and sexual difference. However, contestations over these meanings cannot only be seen as textual representations of gender relations in particular popular cultural forms, but they are significant, as Roman and Christian-Smith point out, 'in the lives of actual women and men who consume, use, and make sense of them in the contexts of their daily practices and social relations'⁶. Popular cultural forms then appear to be important sources for providing the contexts of the conflicting power relations within which women and men learn their gender roles in the process of becoming feminine and masculine.

Like any other popular cultural text, the women's magazine contains conflicting and contradictory representations of femininity. Because there are conflicting interests and discourses⁷ at play in the production of the magazines in question, such as

⁵ Stuart Hall, 'Notes on Deconstructing the Popular', in *People's History and Socialist Theory* (ed.) R. Samuel, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 227-41 (p. 239).

⁶ L. Roman, L.K. Christian-Smith, 'Introduction', *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, (eds.) L. Roman, L.K. Christian-Smith and E. Ellsworth, (East Sussex: Palmer, 1998), pp.1-36, (p.4).

⁷ The term discourse has a wide range of possible significations in literary and cultural theory, and yet it is not often defined within theoretical texts. It has diverse definitions, for example, with regard to its philosophical meaning, a set of theoretical meanings and the general meaning of the term. I take one of Foucault's definitions of the term discourse in this study. Foucault defines it as 'an individualizable group of statements' when he is discussing the particular structures within discourse. He is concerned with being able to identify discourses, that is, groups of utterances which seem to be regulated in some way and which seem to have a coherence and a force to them in common. This definition makes it

commercial, patriarchal and feminist discourses. Therefore, appropriation of feminism in these texts is often limited to the needs and interests of the women's magazine market and their audiences. When it is looked at from a cross-cultural perspective, specific conditions and politics might engender a variety of diverse forms for the popularisation of feminism. Considering the historical, socio-political and cultural specificities of the Turkish and British contexts, as will be discussed in detail later, the way the British and Turkish magazines engage with feminism differs. Although their engagement with feminist themes and issues is complex and involves various dimensions, by comparing and contrasting the magazines, I argue that the Turkish women's magazines in question primarily provide an outlet for diverse women's voices and share a common goal with feminist politics of promoting female empowerment. In contrast, feminism is predominantly recognized as a cultural value by the British women's magazines through which feminism is turned into a commodity sign value. In other words, feminism is often redefined through commodities and fetishized into a symbol of things, i.e., a style, a look.

In this introduction, I discuss the relative merits of the perspectives in women's magazines scholarship and elucidate the theoretical and methodological approach employed in the study. Therefore I first review the work of feminists with regard to popular culture within cultural studies, which challenged the early work done by the pioneers of cultural studies. Then I discuss feminist theoretical and methodological approaches to studying women's magazines. Finally, I introduce and discuss the

possible to talk about a discourse of femininity, a discourse of imperialism, and so on. My use of the term discourse is placed within this understanding rather than others. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Sheridan Smith, A.M., (London: Tavistock, 1972), p.80.

central themes that have structured my analysis of women's magazines, pre-eminent among them the relationship between the discursive world of women's magazines, and changing modes of femininity and feminism.

Emergence of Feminist Analyses of Popular Culture within Cultural Studies

Feminism and popular culture have had an ambiguous relationship, and as Morag Shiach puts it, the terms are not parallel: 'one designates a political space, the other an object of study'⁸. Yet Shiach points out that 'popular culture' is a broad field of study which carries within it a series of debates about political legitimacy, class identity, and cultural value, which inform the theoretical framework and the methodological procedures of cultural studies. She finds these associations problematic for feminism and states that "popular culture" as an institutional space, and as a political concept, embodies definitions of class identity, historical change and political struggle which are often blind to the questions of feminism' (ibid.).

Early feminist research on popular culture⁹ emerged as a critique of this aspect of popular culture and often condemned the media as the most important cause of the reproduction of patriarchal relations between sexes. These studies conceived popular media texts as producing transparent and unrealistic messages about women and

⁸ Shiach, 1994, p.331.

⁹ Early feminist criticism and discussions about popular cultural representations of femininity were Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (London: Penguin, 1963) and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1970). Other studies of early media criticism were compiled in the anthology *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media* by Gaye Tuchman (ed.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

considered women as passive consumers of the media. Identifying the media as the enemy not only oversimplifies women's position in society but also assumes a homogeneous category of 'women' and therefore ignores differences of class, age, race and sexuality.

This approach, however, has been challenged by feminist cultural studies scholars who argue that popular media texts offer a multiplicity of meanings, and thus a multiplicity of readings and identifications. The power of the media is still recognized but more broadly conceived questions are being asked about representations of women, such as how media representations work, how audiences interact with them and what sense they make out of these representations. Analysis of media representations has increasingly become central to cultural studies over the last two decades. Cultural studies, as Susan Sheridan puts it, 'takes the meaning of modern social experience as its field and explores the ways in which gender, class and other social differences are produced in various sites within this field'¹⁰. Although 'class' has always been an important analytical category for cultural studies researchers, the study of gender as a category in this field was introduced through the effort of feminist critics.

In relation to popular culture, the pioneering works of cultural studies, such as Richard Hoggart (*The Uses of Literacy*)¹¹, Raymond Williams (*Culture and*

¹⁰ Susan Sheridan, 'Reading the Women's Weekly: Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture' in *Transitions: Australian Feminisms* (eds.) Barbara Caine and Rosemary Pringle, (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1995), pp.88-101, (p.89).

¹¹ Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957).

Society)¹², or E.P. Thompson (*The Making of the English Working Class*)¹³ focused on, as Shiach comments, ‘the cultural hierarchies of the nineteenth century and distinctive ways of theorizing them’¹⁴. These studies select cultural forms that exclude or marginalize women, and describe them as representative of the ‘typical working-class condition’. Their work played a significant role in shaping the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, whose analyses of popular culture as a site of ‘domination and resistance’ appeared to form the institutional and academic understandings of popular culture in the 1970s. *Resistance Through Rituals*¹⁵, for instance, studied male subcultures in the context of an analysis of class and hegemony derived from the work of Antonio Gramsci. However, much of the early work in this field relegates questions of gender, race, sexual orientation, and personal life to secondary status.

Some feminist scholars, such as McRobbie, criticized the work of early cultural studies researchers for marginalizing young women in their cultural analyses.¹⁶ Accordingly, early cultural studies failed to understand how young women were positioned within the contradictions of domesticity and work, and also their relations with popular culture and their differences from boys. Feminists also reacted against the early media studies research which saw certain media forms, such as television news, sportscasts, and their consumer practices as worthy of analysis. They argued

¹² Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society 1780-1950* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958).

¹³ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, (London: Gollancz, 1963).

¹⁴ Shiach, 1994, p.335.

¹⁵ S. Hall and T Jefferson (eds.), *Resistance Through Rituals; Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain* (London: Hutchinson, 1976).

¹⁶ For example, in her article ‘Settling Accounts with Subcultures’, Angela McRobbie criticised strongly the weight of male subcultural studies and their masculinism. *Screen Education*, 1980, 34, pp. 37-49.

that these studies focused entirely on the popular cultural media forms which mainly addressed male audiences and consumers.¹⁷ Feminist researchers of media studies maintained that it was not enough to show that the media were not neutral agents of cultural production. Considering the relationship between gendered identities and the media, politics and society, they further argued that analysis of media could not neglect gender as a structuring element in media.¹⁸

The essays in *Women Take Issue*¹⁹ were among the first to examine how gender differentiation is linked to class, race, and age. Feminist researchers, such as Hobson, McRobbie and Winship, who worked within the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, produced groundbreaking work by interrupting the masculinist tendencies and terms of popular cultural debates.²⁰ They challenged the gender blindness of previous studies in the centre. By looking at the popular cultural texts mainly aimed at girls and women, their work focused on the construction of a gendered subjectivity and emphasized the importance of 'femininity' as an organizing category within political identities. This development can be considered in such a way that cultural studies as a field emerged, 'as a gender struggle between men and

¹⁷ See for example, S. Cohen & J. Young, *The Manufacture of News* (London: Constable, 1973); J. Fiske & J. Hartley, *Reading Television* (London: Methuen, 1978); B. Jones, 'The end of the affair', *Working papers in Cultural Studies*, 3, pp. 89-101.

¹⁸ See, for instance, R. Harrison, "'Shirley': Relations of reproduction and the ideology of romance"; CCCS Women's Studies Group, *Women Take Issue* (London: Hutchinson, 1978), pp. 176-95; A. McRobbie, *Jackie: An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity*, (Birmingham: The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 1978); D. Hobson, 'Housewives and the Mass Media' in *Culture, Media, Language*, S. Hall *et al.*, (London: Hutchinson, 1980) pp. 105-114.

¹⁹ CCCS Women's Studies Group, *Women Take Issue* (London: Hutchinson, 1978).

²⁰ Hobson, 1980, pp. 105-114; McRobbie, 1978; Janice Winship, 'A Woman's World: *Woman* - an Ideology of Femininity' in *Women Take Issue* (London: Hutchinson and Birmingham CCCS Women's Studies Group, 1978) pp.133-154.

women researchers at the Birmingham Centre over the terms, contexts, and issues that were at stake in defining popular culture'²¹.

Feminist scholarship over the last two decades has focused extensively on commercial media as a significant forum for constructing and disseminating ideal images of womanhood, femininity, and gender identity. The importance of so-called women's genres such as soap operas, romance literature, women's magazines, advertising and certain genres of film were highlighted. Changes observed in the nature of the studies in this field can be understood, as Helen Baehr and Ann Gray suggest, 'as part of the growing theoretical work on understanding femininity, female identity and the politics of culture'²².

One of the main concerns of feminist analyses has been the ways that visual and written popular cultural forms re-define the category of woman and femininity and furthermore construct female subjectivities²³, sexual differences, and pleasure. Therefore women as consumers of media constitute the central subjects of their analysis. A key component of their work was 'the attempt to locate the reception of media within the sexual division of labour and in relation to women's and girls'

²¹ Leslie G. Roman, Linda K. Christian-Smith and Elizabeth Ellsworth (eds.) *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, Introduction, (Basingstoke: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 1988), p.14.

²² Helen Baehr & Ann Gray (eds.), *Turning it On: A Reader in Women & Media*, Section Two, (London: Arnold, 1996), p. 59.

²³ Christian-Smith maintains that one important contribution of feminism to cultural studies has been in focusing inquiry on the ways that culture as social processes and practices constructs gendered subjectivity. Linda K. Christian-Smith, 'Romancing the Girl: Adolescent Romance Novels and the Construction of Femininity' in *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, (eds.) Leslie G. Roman, Linda K. Christian-Smith and Elizabeth Ellsworth, (Basingstoke: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 1988), pp. 76-101, (p.76).

isolated and subordinate positions in the home'²⁴. Hobson's studies of women's favourite television and radio shows were the pioneering works in this field.²⁵

Feminist cultural studies scholars have explored not only the representations of women in popular culture, how texts construct, for example, sexual difference, but more extensively, the ways women resist and negotiate power relations, particularly through social practices connected with popular culture and mass communications. Thus the emphasis in feminist studies of popular culture has come to include what meanings these texts may have for consumers. These studies gave a central place for the audience. They have focused on different practices such as fan-identification with MTV stars, the ways in which soap operas offer particular pleasures for women, and romance reading as evidence of proto-feminist impulses within the lives of these girls and women.²⁶ One of the pioneering works in this field was undertaken by Tania Modleski. In her book *Loving with a Vengeance*, she analysed three cultural forms, romantic fiction, Gothic novels, and television soap operas, arguing that each was both overwhelmingly consumed by women, and notably absent from theorizations of popular culture. In looking at these texts, she bases her argument partly on the rejection of cultural pessimism and refuses to see such texts as either escapism or ideological manipulation. Instead, she argues that 'their enormous and continuing popularity suggests that they speak to very real problems and tensions in women's

²⁴ Roman, Christian-Smith & Ellsworth, 1988, p.18.

²⁵ See for example, Hobson, 1980; and Dorothy Hobson, *Crossroads* (London: Methuen, 1982).

²⁶ See, for instance, Lisa A. Lewis, *Gender Politics and MTV: Voicing the Difference* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990) ; Christine Geraghty, 'A Woman's Space' in *Turning it On: A Reader in Woman and Media*, (eds.) H. Baehr & A. Gray, (London: Arnold, 1996); and Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

lives'²⁷. Janice Radway's study on romance reading is another early example in the field which is based on open interviews with the readers.²⁸ She considers the act of reading as a complex activity and part of a social and everyday event. Reading, according to Radway, is an active process of negotiation which engenders both meaning and pleasure.

As the development of feminist research in this field shows, feminist critics no longer condemn images of femininity out of hand, or criticize popular cultural texts, particularly women's genres, for portraying women from a male point of view. These texts are considered progressive as they often present a female point of view and use feminist ideas implicitly or explicitly which offer the possibility of resistance, and allow for the representation of strong and transgressive women. Feminists have produced important studies in this field where theoretical and methodological attention has been paid to texts which had been dismissed as trivial, distracting, and irrelevant by early researchers. Thus the work of feminists has helped to establish femininity as an analytical category.

However, one of the pitfalls of the feminist research discussed above is to position women merely as consumers of popular culture. Consequently, within the field of cultural studies the attempt to develop a feminist critique, as Shiach argues, 'has driven women increasingly towards questions of pleasure and consumption, and away

²⁷ Tania Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced fantasies for women*, (New York: Methuen, 1984), p.14.

²⁸ Radway, 1984.

from those of history and production'²⁹. A connection between the production and the consumption of popular cultural texts and gendered subjectivities is often overlooked. Such an approach not only drives feminists increasingly towards questions of pleasure and consumption but also maintains the dominant dichotomies. Modleski points to this tendency within feminist research and says 'countless critics...persist in equating femininity, consumption and reading on the one hand and masculinity, production and writing on the other'³⁰. In order to challenge these dichotomies or establish a productive relation between women and cultural commodities, it appears crucial that feminist critique needs significant theoretical and political advances to deal with the questions of history and production as well as pleasure and consumption. Shiach expresses her anxiety about the emphasis of feminist critique within the field of cultural studies and says,

...this emphasis on consumption, on pleasure, on femininity, can make it impossible for feminist critics to develop a sustained critique of the dominant paradigms of cultural studies, which offer universality, productivity, politics, and struggle. It therefore tends to marginalize feminist critique within the discipline of cultural studies, and to reinforce those unhelpful dichotomies which place men in history and women in the home.³¹

If feminist criticism is to articulate the political and cultural identities of women, feminist critics must open up popular cultural texts to a wider debate. As Shiach suggests, 'they must find ways to challenge the hierarchies and oppositions that have fractured the discipline of cultural studies'³². One way of initiating such a debate can

²⁹ Shiach, 1991, p.337.

³⁰ Tania Modleski, 'Femininity as Mas(s)querade: A feminist approach to mass culture', in *High Theory/Low Culture: Analysing popular Television and Film*, (ed.) C. MacCabe, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp. 37-52, (p.41).

³¹ Shiach, 1991, p. 337.

³² Shiach, 1991, p. 338.

be possible by shifting the emphasis from consumption to production which allows more effective ways of delivering a feminist politics and developing theories that would address the experience of women as both producers and consumers of cultural meanings. The study takes this approach to popular culture as it provides the tools to investigate how gendered subjectivities are reproduced in any given culture or cross-culturally, by whom they are reproduced, in whose interests they work, and how they are constructed. I discuss the framework of the study in relation to the analysis of contemporary women's magazines after a review of the development of feminist scholarship on women's magazines.

Feminist Research on Women's Magazines

Since the establishment of Women's Studies programmes, there has been a growing literature on the significance of women's magazines and they have come to be recognized as worthy of study in media and cultural studies. There have been different stages of analysis though these stages do not follow a strictly chronological order, thus allowing overlaps.

In the early 1970s, feminist research in the field claimed that women's magazines conveyed messages which primarily concerned traditional feminine beauty, fashion, and romance, and thus portrayed false and objectified images of women for the benefit of consumer culture. According to this view, glossy advertisements were trying to convince the reader that they would overcome their inadequacies and bodily

dissatisfactions and improve self-esteem through buying the consumer goods they offered. For example, in her influential feminist manifesto, *The Female Eunuch* (1970), Germaine Greer, whose analysis resonates with that of the Frankfurt School³³, argued that ideology in women's magazines worked by strategies of distortion, through the imposition of false consciousness.

However, over the last two decades feminist analyses of women's magazines have changed in conjunction with the equally visible changes which have been observed in the world of women's magazines over the same period. A more critical and analytical body of work on women's magazines has been developed. Some studies drew on Althusser's theory of ideology³⁴ acknowledging the fact that meanings and values of ideology were socially constructed. Studies on the concept of ideology emphasized its significance in the reproduction of the existing relations of institutional power in society. Institutionalised power relations, such as patriarchy and capitalism, determine the means of the 'ideal' image of woman and 'sexual difference'. Winship says 'all of us as women "achieve" our subjectivity in relation to a definition of women which in part is produced by women's magazines' and adds that 'this image encapsulates patriarchy in its articulation under capitalism'³⁵.

³³ Members of the Frankfurt School are recognized as the most influential theorists of 'mass culture', such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer. Although the Frankfurt School theory mainly focuses on 'mass' experience in the context of paid labour and industrial capitalism, feminist criticism employed this theory to explore the oppression of a different class, a sex class of women.

³⁴ Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in *Lenin and Philosophy* (London: New Left Books, 1977).

³⁵ Winship, 1978, p. 134.

Feminist scholars examined the constructions of the ideal image of femininity and its ideological implications in women's magazines texts (written and/or visual). For example, early works of both Angela McRobbie³⁶ and Janice Winship³⁷, from the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies were concerned with the ideological constructions of femininity in women's and teenage magazines. Both these theorists used semiotics and a Marxist analysis of social hegemony in their analyses.

Although limited there are some studies on Turkish women's magazines such as Yesim Arat's, a Turkish feminist scholar, study on an Islamist journal *Kadın ve Aile*³⁸ (Woman and Family). Arat follows a similar framework to examine how woman's identity in the pages of this magazine is constructed through an Islamic ideology. She is also concerned with the role of the magazine as an institution in expanding the possibilities of the daily lives of the women who produce or read it, through constructing alternative subjectivities to the Islamic identity of women.

With the impact of post-structuralist writing in the 1980s, feminist scholarship on women's magazines has moved beyond ideology, as it was acknowledged that the concept of ideology suggested some underlying true state of being which meant some kind of ideal and essential state of womanhood. As McRobbie writes, 'instead of

³⁶ McRobbie, 1978. See also her later work on *Jackie* magazine; 'Jackie: An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity' in *Popular Culture: Past and Present*, B. Waites, T. Bennet and G. Martin (eds.), (London: OUP and Routledge, 1993), pp.263-83.

³⁷ Winship, 1978.

³⁸ Yesim Arat, 'Feminism and Islam: Considerations on the Journal *Kadın ve Aile*', in *Women in Modern Turkish Society* (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, London: Zed, 1995), pp. 66-77.

seeking to uncover the truth behind ideology, the question now was to consider the power of meaning³⁹. At this stage of feminist analysis, women's magazines are seen as commercial, competitive sites where what it is to be a woman in contemporary society is defined. While packages of meaning offered about womanhood help shape women's consciousness they also produce desires and pleasures. Thus in addition to the analysis of the meaning and construction of signification in women's magazines, feminist researchers began to raise questions about the textual pleasures that women's magazines offered their readers. Psychoanalysis has come to dominate accounts of textual pleasure in literary and cultural studies. This approach to studying women's magazines, however, has a danger of celebrating it as a source of female pleasure and of overlooking its ideological implications.

On the other hand, the question of female pleasure has led feminist academics to reconsider the relationship between feminists and 'ordinary women' as it was recognized that most women seem to share many of the same pleasures. For example, with regard to reading women's magazines a group of feminist researchers who examined women's magazines began their book by admitting the fact that their enthusiasm for this study stemmed from their pleasure in reading women's magazines themselves.⁴⁰ Yet they point out that 'this pleasure is by no means pure, unambiguous or unproblematic' (ibid.), and accordingly readers are capable of negotiating contradictory and ideological representations of femininity. This admission by feminist researchers, as McRobbie argues, 'begins to break down the lines of

³⁹ McRobbie, 1997, p.193.

⁴⁰ Ros Ballaster, Margaret Beetham, Elizabeth Frazer and Sandra Hebron, *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Women's Magazine* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p.1.

opposition between “feminism” and “femininity”⁴¹. Thus it implies that the gap between feminists and non-feminist women has narrowed. This can be seen as one of the effective factors in the popularisation of feminism.

Since the late 1980s, feminist researchers have granted more power to the female reader. While some of the studies in women’s magazines remained within the domain of textual analysis, some other studies are, partially, based on experiences of readers. For example, Ballaster *et al.* (1991) carried out group interviews with female readers to examine the relation between the implied reader and the actual reading subject. While the authors argued that readers negotiate the meaning of women’s magazines in a complex and contradictory way they still claimed that reading these magazines is an ‘institutionalised’ practice which sustains and legitimises unequal gender relations. The study is preoccupied, as Joke Hermes comments, ‘with how feminism can most effectively challenge gender difference as it is reified and fixed by women’s magazines throughout their centuries long existence’⁴².

Janice Winship’s *Inside Women’s Magazines*⁴³ is another study which combines textual and reception analysis, though it is a study of one reader, the author herself. By focusing on three magazines, Winship analysed the pleasures they offered and the criticism that one might have as a reader, in this case herself. However, her analysis concerning her individual experience of the everyday nature of reading women’s magazines cannot represent the majority of readers. Joke Hermes’ ethnographic work

⁴¹ McRobbie, 1997, p.194.

⁴² Joke Hermes, *Reading Women’s Magazines*, (Oxford: Polity and Blackwell, 1995), p. 3.

⁴³ Janice Winship, *Inside Women’s Magazines*, (London: Pandora Press, 1987).

Reading Women's Magazines (1995), on the other hand, aims to theorize how women's magazines become meaningful for readers in the context of their everyday lives. She interviews eighty readers to examine this process of making sense of women's magazines.

Ethnographic research within cultural studies proves to be a useful method of studying the way people use cultural texts in making sense of their lives and providing pleasure. However, as has already been pointed out, this study approaches the production of meaning through a study of the cultural texts themselves and their producers. Moreover, how women's magazines are received and made meaningful by readers is not part of the central concerns of this study. Therefore the scope of the research includes cultural products, the market and the producers and leaves out reception of these texts.

As the studies discussed above show, while the majority of the previous studies intended to show women's magazines as exemplifying oppression, the focus of recent research has shifted as the content of magazines shifted towards seeking improvements for the individual. The gradual investment of women's magazines in issues relating to women's emancipation has changed their approach to many topics. For example, the paternalistic tone of women's magazines and advice on good housekeeping have been replaced by other kinds of advice and a liberal version of feminism. Having a better career and being financially independent is often promoted. Self-improvement has become the underlying principle of young women's magazines.

Linda Wood, the editor of *Cosmopolitan*, points to a significant change in women's lives over the 1960s and 1970s emphasizing the increasing number of women acquiring financial independence. She makes a link between this change and the content of the magazine: 'when *Cosmopolitan* was launched in the early 1970s it responded to this change in women's lives and it was aimed at women who could take control of their own lives' (Appendix A, p. iv). As McRobbie argues there is an ongoing relation between feminism and young women's magazines and she points to 'a loosening up of the opposition between feminism and femininity'⁴⁴. Feminist discourses are incorporated and appropriated by women's magazines and advertisers to the extent that the notion of femininity has increasingly come to be associated with feminist ideas and values. This change points to a need to reconsider the relationship between the concepts of femininity and feminism in contemporary women's magazines.

Reconceptualization of the Relationship Between Feminism and Femininity

The production of media texts is replete with tensions and contradictions resulting from conflicting interests and discourses. In the case of women's magazines, their form and content are largely determined by the articulation of the interests of capital and of patriarchy⁴⁵. Yet the relations of capital and of patriarchy are not unproblematic, they are sometimes in tension. Thus discourse is not monolithic:

⁴⁴ McRobbie, 1997, p.195.

⁴⁵ The term patriarchy is understood here as a system of social structures, social relations and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women.

women's magazines present multiple contradictions in the representations of femininity offered within a single issue. In addition to patriarchal and commercial discourses, feminism is also, as McRobbie states, 'a discursive formation and, as a political force, it too is given over to representing women'⁴⁶. Thus the most significant tensions in women's magazines can be seen as having three dimensions: commercial concern which exploits women as consumers, patriarchal concern which perpetuates heterosexuality as a necessary precondition of women's acceptance of unequal gender relations, and feminist concern which aims to empower women in the public and private spheres. Consequently, to use Smith's phrase, 'a textually-mediated discourse'⁴⁷ of femininity in women's magazines is produced by these conflicting interests and discourses. Women's magazines in this study are seen as one of the spheres of cultural production in which these different and often conflicting interests and discourses are managed, negotiated and harmonized both in their production and consumption phases. This view underlines the fact that a dominant ideology is not encoded without contradictions into popular cultural forms, nor do they produce unitary reading subjects. Popular cultural forms or lived social relations always exist in a network of power relations. As a result of this, meaning in these texts is constructed in discourses that reflect and produce power.

However, when the terms capitalism, patriarchy and feminism are considered from a cross-cultural perspective they do not necessarily mean the same thing. For example,

⁴⁶ McRobbie, 1997, p.193.

⁴⁷ Dorothy E. Smith, 'Femininity as Discourse' in *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, (eds.) Leslie G. Roman & Linda K. Christian-Smith, Elizabeth Ellsworth (Basingstoke: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 1988), pp. 37-59 (p.41).

in Britain, a post-industrial country, and Turkey, a developing and Islamic country, the histories, conditions and contexts in which these terms have emerged and developed differ. Thus, as will be discussed in the next chapter, cultural dynamics specific to these countries have a great effect on the contemporary status of feminism and its engagement with women's magazines' discourses.

The notion of femininity is not fixed and stable. Definitions of femininity are continually changing, for example, consumer discourses have redefined femininity in almost every decade of this century. These various constructions of femininity reveal that femininity is an ongoing, unfolding, historically evolving social organization. McRobbie uses the phrase 'changing modes of femininity'⁴⁸ emphasizing how fluid gender practices and meaning structures are. For example, during the interwar period, Myra Macdonald notes three constructions of feminine identity which dominated advertising discourse: 'the capable household manager; the guilt-ridden mother; and the self indulgent 'flapper''⁴⁹ The aim of constructing these femininities was, of course, to enhance women's spending power. Later in the 1970s, advertisers tended to recognize the debate about women's changing roles and aspirations as feminists began to fight against advertising's sexism. An independent but still feminine image of woman was constructed by consumer discourses in which the 'working woman' became the target. Magazine publishers and advertisers began to acknowledge the fact that 'women wished to be regarded as individuals rather than as roles'⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ Angela McRobbie, *Postmodernism and Popular Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p.157.

⁴⁹ Myra Macdonald, *Representing Women: Myths of Femininity in the Popular Media*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), p.77.

⁵⁰ Macdonald, 1995, p.87.

Consumer discourses have taken a new approach to feminism since the 1980s and 1990s. Concomitant with the ideological shifts in the construction of femininity by consumer discourses yet another 'new woman' emerged who has come to be labelled as 'postfeminist'. Macdonald explains the invention of the 'new woman' as follows:

Believing both that feminism's battles had been won, and that its ideology was now harmless by virtue of being out of date, advertisers invented 'postfeminism' as a utopia where women could do whatever they pleased, provided they had sufficient will and enthusiasm.⁵¹

The 'postfeminist woman' in the 1980s was constructed as an image of a superwoman who successfully combined pursuing a career and taking care of the family. The emphasis of much of the popular conception of postfeminism is focused on, as Brooks notes, 'the issue of women's rights and equal opportunities'⁵². Consumer discourses absorbed the terminology of self-assertiveness and achievement to construct a new female identity.

Feminist issues have not only been incorporated into the traditional spheres of femininity, in other words in women's genres, but also in the whole expansive field of the mass media, e.g. in arts programmes, drama, documentary etc. Moreover the range of cultural material available for female audiences is not restricted to a single group of women from a specific background, e.g. young middle-class. Due to the dissemination of feminist ideas through various channels in popular media, feminist issues have influenced the way in which young women express themselves in daily

⁵¹ Macdonald, 1995, p.90.

⁵² Ann Brooks, *Postfeminisms: Feminism, Cultural Theory and Cultural Forms*, (London: Routledge:1997), p.4.

life, such as their appearance or life style. This situation points to a shift in female experience and in the construction of femininity in the 1990s, as McRobbie puts it, ‘the old binary opposition which put femininity at one end of the political spectrum and feminism at the other is no longer an accurate way of conceptualising young female experience (maybe it never was)’⁵³. Diffusion of feminist ideas into the material and ideological structures of society has contributed significantly to the redefinition of female experience and thus the concept of femininity. This thesis considers what emerges from this realignment: in which ways current feminist discourses engage in a conflict about redefinitions of femininity in women’s magazines, and furthermore what the possibilities and limitations of constructing feminist politics and gender consciousness within popular culture are.

The argument presented here is that the editors’ attitudes towards feminism need to be taken into consideration in an attempt to understand how the gap between feminism and femininity has been closing. Thus the production of meaning in women’s magazines in this study is approached by employing textual analysis, in order to investigate the way they construct for readers a variety of positions from which to identify or understand themselves. But also the role of woman as the producer of the text in the constitution of female subjectivities is studied through the editors of the magazines in question. This approach places women as producers of cultural meanings and therefore allows us to consider articulation of the cultural or political identities of women. Today, the staff of women’s magazines are almost exclusively

⁵³ McRobbie, 1996, p. 158.

women who have been exposed to feminist ideas as feminism increasingly became a strong point of reference in culture in the 1990s. Some women's magazines editors even think of themselves as feminists. For example, Duygu Asena, who worked as the editor of *Kadınca* between 1978-1992, became a popular symbol of feminism during the 1980s. Editors, who actually find ways of dealing with the conflicting and contradictory discourses of women's magazines, appear to be the key people in the process of the production of meaning. Thus in order to analyse how women's magazines try to bridge the ideological distance between 'feminism' and 'femininity' and to what extent articulations of feminist politics have any intention of challenging patriarchal views of femininity, this study underlines the importance of including the women's magazines' editors in the analysis as cultural producers, as well as textual analysis of the magazines. This approach provides an insight into how feminist issues are negotiated in popular culture.

The issues outlined in this introduction are compared and contrasted in the British and Turkish women's magazines identified earlier. There are two dimensions to the comparison of two cultures: firstly, when a concept, say feminism, is imported to another culture, in this case to Turkey, it is further re-contextualized, often in the form of hybridity. Cultural hybridity is understood here as the fusion of cultures that marks significant changes, hope of newness, and space for creativity. The concept of feminism also becomes distorted and transformed to enable it to be comprehended and appropriated within existing cultural values and codes, for instance the gender codes of a given culture. As will be discussed in the following chapter, gender politics

occupies the public sphere in a Muslim context in Turkey in a different way than the Western, Christian context. For instance, gender politics appears to remain as a battleground between modernism and Islamism in contemporary Turkey. The ongoing struggle between these oppositional ideologies in the public sphere provides the background for feminist movements in Turkey. With respect to gender, politics and the public sphere, Nilüfer Göle identifies two historical moments of change in Turkish history and contemporary experience: ‘the projects of modernization in the 1920s, and movements of Islamization in the 1980s’⁵⁴. Therefore, an analysis of the formation of feminist thought in Turkey and its contemporary status allow me to examine how a culture re-appropriates a concept, notion or theory when it is imported into its own context and how it differs from the Western context, say the British context, within which it emerged and developed. For instance, certain options and stratagems and ways of coping with certain problems may still be taboo in Turkey, whereas in Britain it may be possible that those stratagems have become so central to the corpus of feminism that they have become a new orthodoxy. The similarities to and contrasts with the non-Western feminist movements provide us with further clues to understanding the current complex feminist discourses engendered by other social movements and the socio-political context of Britain.

Secondly, through using products of popular culture, more specifically women’s magazines, I look at how these texts appropriate feminist politics and redefine feminism for young women in the 1990s in Turkey and Britain. By using the case

⁵⁴ Nilüfer Göle, ‘The Gendered Nature of the Public Sphere’, *Public Culture*, 10 (1), 1997, pp. 61-81, (p. 61).

study I hope to draw some conclusions about the relationship between feminism and femininity as constructed in contemporary women's magazines: how and to what extent feminist values and broader debates about non-traditional roles for women are incorporated into the large circulation women's magazines, and to what extent they have any intention of challenging patriarchal views of femininity. Thus the role of popular culture in these two countries in forming a collective consciousness among women for women's empowerment and in providing an outlet to challenge the traditional forms of gender representations is discussed.

Methodology

Different approaches are applied to examine the ways in which feminism is embedded into popular and consumer discourses as well as to compare the similarities and differences of feminist images and values articulated, constructed, and (re)defined in British and Turkish magazines. The methodology is derived from feminist critical theory and cultural studies. The methodology, which is mainly qualitative in nature, includes semiology, discourse analysis, psychoanalysis and structured interviews⁵⁵. I also apply content analysis to the written texts. My rationale in doing content analysis is firstly to find out which topics appear and how often they are repeated in women's magazines. Secondly and more importantly is to discover how they work as a signifying system and a bearer of a certain ideology⁵⁶ and how this ideology deals

⁵⁵ The editors of the women's magazines which are chosen for the case study, *Cosmopolitan*, *New Woman*, *Kim* and *Kadınca*, have been interviewed. Interviews are presented in Appendix A.

⁵⁶ Ideology is a contested concept and defined from different perspectives for different purposes. In order to make clear my use of the term ideology, I would like to refer to Berger's definition of the term: 'an ideology is a systematic and comprehensive set of ideas relating to and explaining social and

with the construction of contemporary femininity and of feminist concepts and images. This methodology allows me to examine the various ways that feminist values and broader debates about non-traditional roles for women are incorporated into national, large circulation women's magazines. The emphasis is on how the texts in women's magazines, which predominantly stress patriarchal market values, include non-traditional options for women. It is based on a systematic and comparative analysis of *Cosmopolitan*, *New Woman*, *Kim* and *Kadınca*.

While content analysis is an accepted method in the field of social sciences, there are no fixed rules which determine its framework. The form, units of analysis and level of analysis vary from one text to another, depending on the aim of the research. In this study I intend to use the content analysis of the women's magazines to produce a quantitative base for qualitative analysis. It is a collation of the frequency of occurrence of various content characteristics - words or texts - and thus operates at the surface level. This method helps to identify which issues are covered or left out of specific magazines. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, permits an investigation of deeper levels of meaning and is concerned more with content as a mediator or reflector of hidden cultural phenomena. Furthermore, it permits a more complex analysis of themes on a sub-textual level. However, there is a certain crossover between the two approaches, hopefully bringing new insights. Marjorie Ferguson in her text *Forever Feminine*⁵⁷ has followed this kind of circular

political life'. *Cultural Criticism: A primer of Key Concepts*, by Arthur Asa Berger, (London: Sage, 1995), p.58.

⁵⁷ Marjorie Ferguson, *Forever Feminine: Women's Magazines and the Cult of Feminine*, (London: Heinemann, 1983).

relationship to analyse women's journals: the categories for quantitative analysis emerged from a preliminary qualitative probe. This study applies this approach to analyse the women's magazines in question.

Analysis of any cultural product or of media representations cannot be divorced from the wider context of ownership and editorial control of media products. Thus the editors of the women's magazines studied in this thesis have been interviewed in order to provide their own accounts of women's magazines and feminist issues. The information gathered from the interviews is used in addition to the textual analysis of women's magazines to examine to what extent editors' accounts overlap with the actual content of the magazines, and furthermore how influential they are in shaping the content of the magazines and what their characteristics and strategies might signify for the future of women's magazines from the viewpoint of feminist politics.

Statistical information on the number of current women's periodicals and their circulations has also been taken into consideration. These figures enable us to draw a picture of the market size and to show how the magazines in question fit into the range of the other women's magazines available. There seem to be two dominant influences on the growth and ideology of women's magazines. The women's movement in general created a particular political climate of growing expectations and awareness. At the same time, the expansion of 'transnationalization' in the leisure industry provided ready-made development models for other cultures. For instance, an American women's magazine *Cosmopolitan* is now produced in local versions in

more than twenty countries. Considering texts within given markets and production dynamics can help to, as Douglas Kellner points out, ‘elucidate features and effects of the texts that textual analysis alone might miss or downplay’⁵⁸. It is the production, distribution and structure of the market that often determines what sort of cultural texts are produced and what structural limits there are.

a) Sample Design and The Focus of Analysis

Not only the choice of particular women’s magazines, but also the choice of women’s magazines from a range of other popular cultural products require some justification. When women’s magazines are considered historically in Britain and Turkey, there appears to be a strong link between them and women’s movements. The two, in fact, developed in parallel. In Turkey, for instance, as will be discussed later, the contemporary feminist movement has influenced the content of women’s magazines as well as the market size. A woman’s magazine is a medium that targets a readership of mainly women. Recent market research undertaken on the readership of women’s magazines shows that approximately ten percent of the readers are men, yet this does not totally change the characteristics (sex, class, age etc.) of the main target readership. As the market is divided into sections, the media industry identifies its specific target audience in order to address a well-defined group for its economic concerns, i.e. advertising. Thus targeting a female readership in the case of women’s magazines is a publisher’s decision.

⁵⁸ Douglas Kellner, ‘Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and Media Culture’ in *Gender, Race and Class in Media*, (eds.) Gail Dines & Jean M. Humez, (California: Sage, 1995), pp. 5-17, (p.9).

Women easily identify themselves with women's magazines because the problems or pleasures that stem from being a woman are legitimised and treated at different levels in these magazines. Contemporary young women's magazines, including the ones analysed in the case study, deal with the contradictions that women face in private or in public, and offer themselves as 'friends' to resolve these contradictions. 'Feminine' values are emphasized, e.g. the feminine beauty myth, in order to sell the magazines and also the commodities promoted in the magazines. At the same time, these magazines offer information on women's legal rights or how to be free and independent individuals and so on. Thus, the analysis of the incorporation of commercial and popular discourses with feminist messages and images in this study is limited to a medium mainly written by and for women which offers a sense of identity and definitions of femininity for contemporary women.

As will be discussed in chapter two, a number of women's magazines are currently published in Turkey and in Britain. Out of these magazines I have chosen two from each country. If I had chosen to work with a broader spectrum of women's magazines the approach of this study, particularly qualitative analysis, might lack focus. In order to avoid this, I have chosen to work with *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* from Britain and *Kim* and *Kadınca* from Turkey as illustrative of young women's magazines in their own category.⁵⁹ Twelve issues of each magazine from the years 1995-96 have been included. (See Appendix C for the issues included in the analysis in this study.)

⁵⁹ See chapter three for the categorization of diverse women's magazines in Britain and Turkey.

I decided to work on these two controversial Turkish magazines because they have developed similar but individual approaches to feminist issues. The historical backgrounds of *Kim* and *Kadınca* make them valuable analytical materials according for the purpose of this study. Duygu Asena, who was the editor of *Kim* in 1995 and the former editor of *Kadınca*, requires special attention as she played a significant role in the history of these magazines. Asena was one of the nationally influential ‘feminist’ figures in the context of the contemporary Turkish feminist movement in the 1980s, and opened the way for the popularisation of feminism. Following her career as a journalist, she became the editor of *Kadınca*, which was launched in December 1978, and worked as the editor of the magazine for twelve years.⁶⁰ *Kadınca* became a semi-political resource of the feminist movement in the 1980s in Turkey, and thus a rare example in the popular media, in that it tried to define womanhood outside male discourse. When the magazine changed hands, Asena moved to another publishing company with her staff and launched *Kim* in 1993.⁶¹ During this period both magazines became rivals, sought their own feminist identity and, to some extent, conformed to received images of popular culture as well as to patriarchal views of femininity. They were among the best selling women’s magazines in 1995 in Turkey. After having identified the Turkish magazines I needed to find their counterparts in Britain in order to look at certain parallels as well as differences inherent in their approaches. According to 1995 statistics, *Cosmopolitan* was the best selling magazine

⁶⁰ Asena is also known as a writer. Her first and influential book came out in 1987 *Woman Who Had No Name* and earned bestseller status for a long time. Asena’s identity as an editor and as a feminist will be discussed in a wider context later.

⁶¹ As happens in all sectors of the media industry, when a company changes hands not only the structure of it changes but sometimes its ideology may also change. Regarding *Kadınca*, Asena explains that her staff and herself did not want to work with the new owner as they did not have similar views over women’s magazine publishing. (Appendix A, p. xiv).

in Britain. *New Woman* was the fourth best selling young women's magazine in 1995. Thus, these two magazines were chosen because of their high circulation and their popularity among the young women's magazines. The other reason is their approach to women's issues and also their representations of controversial understandings of feminism in the context of Britain. Moreover, like *Kadınca*, *Cosmopolitan* was an influential source of second wave feminism in the 1970s in Britain. Even though *Cosmopolitan* has changed over the years, it is aimed at a female readership which is aware of and has also benefited from the women's liberation movements.

One of the common characteristics of the British and Turkish magazines identified above is that they all address white, middle-class (urban), heterosexual young women. They also combine two controversial and sometimes distinct discourses in their own cultural contexts: feminism and popular culture. The ways in which these magazines deal with these contradictions make them worthy raw materials for the purpose of this study. Their similarities and differences in relation to constructing feminine/feminist images through their approach to popular discourses are examined.

Content analysis of the identified magazines is the focus of several points. First of all, I identify rubrics⁶², then categorize the dominant themes. The dominant themes that emerged from content analysis are discussed under six sub-headings in the case study. These dominant themes include sexuality, family and marriage, self-confident 1990s woman, employment and career, a new phenomenon: masculinity and male identity,

⁶²A rubric is defined as a group of words, especially a title, explanation, or rule in a document. *Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, (Essex: Longman, 1992). I refer to identify the group of words in the content section.

and representation of feminist politics. Then, I look at editorial statements, normally found in the first issue of the magazines. They often embody the initial ‘mission statement’ for the publication which identifies the magazine’s aims and its views about feminism at the time of its initial publication. How and why such views have changed throughout the years (if they have) are also examined.

b) Units of analysis

Content analysis is carried out thematically as identified above and the following three main sections feed in thematic analysis.

- Feature articles: they are dedicated pages which cover a wide range of material dealing with ordinary subjects and also issues that are sometimes considered to be taboo subjects such as abortion, lesbianism, transsexuality and so on.
- Regular sections such as editorials, problem pages, letters.
- Slots like career and work, men and masculinity, feminist politics.

Content analysis is mainly applied to written texts in this study. Yet the women’s magazine is a mixed form including verbal and visual materials. Therefore, some visual materials, such as representation of male images for female pleasure are discussed concerning the debates on male/female gaze by applying psychoanalytic theory. Two in-depth studies of advertisements from each country have also been included in the qualitative analysis to examine in which ways feminist and

commercial discourses are incorporated into visual texts. Thus the feminist and cultural studies methods outlined here provide sufficient tools with which to explore the various ways of appropriating feminist politics into women's magazine discourses.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into three major chapters. In chapter one, debates over contemporary history of feminist activism and feminist theory are discussed firstly in respect to Britain and then to Turkey. The hierarchies of concerns and debates established within the developing discourses of feminism are compared and contrasted. As the study aims to examine the ways in which feminist politics have been incorporated into the discourses of women's magazines, this chapter provides an intellectual and historical context for the analysis of the concept of feminism and its popularisation in contemporary women's magazines.

Diverse feminist discourses developed over the last thirty years have created a particular political climate of growing expectations and awareness among women. Feminist movements have had a considerable effect on the sexual distribution of roles in society and established a new and alternative point of reference. Changing images and roles of women have been endorsed and encouraged to a certain extent by the media. In particular, the women's magazine market has expanded and responded to the changes observed in women's lives over this period. Chapter two explores the

women's magazine form in terms of both an economic system and an ideological system. I therefore put the magazines in question into the context of the market in Britain and Turkey. I present a historical overview of women's magazines in these countries, but the focus is on the current situation of the market. Then I discuss the role of editors in producing contemporary understanding of femininity and the editorial control of the magazine form as a commodity.

Analysis of the magazines, which forms the last chapter, discusses the dominant themes that emerged from content analysis comparatively in the Turkish and British magazines. By comparing and contrasting these issues, this chapter aims to examine in which ways conflicting discourses, capitalist, patriarchal and feminist, are incorporated into women's magazines to redefine femininity in the 1990s, and what this means for feminist politics.

The conclusion tries to bring all the discussions together to draw a conclusion about the popularisation of feminism through commercial women's magazines and suggests new directions for future feminist research, the feminist movements and women's magazines.

The appendix includes some images from the women's magazines analysed in this study, some tables about the British and Turkish women's magazine market and interviews with the four editors. All the translations from Turkish into English, including interviews and other Turkish references used in this study, are my own.

CHAPTER ONE

MAPPING THE CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST DEBATES

IN BRITAIN AND TURKEY

Introduction

This chapter examines contemporary feminist thought in Britain and Turkey with the aim of providing an intellectual and historical context for the analysis of the concept of feminism and its popularisation in contemporary women's magazines. The first part of the chapter, where British feminism is discussed, is divided into two sections. The first section contains a review of the history of feminist movements. A brief examination of the second wave feminist movement, which has advanced the contemporary feminist agenda, is also included.¹ This section also discusses the political context of the 1980s and 1990s in which diverse feminist discourses emerged. The aim of recounting the history of feminist movements is to provide a context for the account of the development of women's magazines and for the emergence of popular feminism. In the second section, the internal feminist theoretical debates and their intersection with other anti-foundationalist movements including postmodernism and poststructuralism are examined. These theoretical debates provide an intellectual context in which the thesis is set. The second part of the chapter focuses on the development of feminist movements and debates in Turkey, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, when the term feminism became

¹ Several researchers have examined the earlier history of feminist movement in Britain from different perspectives. For example see, *Woman's Consciousness Man's World* by Sheila Rowbotham, (London: Pelican Books, 1987); *The Rights and Wrongs of Women* by J. Mitchell and A. Oakley, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976); *Women in Movement* by Sheila Rowbotham (London: Routledge, 1992) and also see *Feminisms: A Reader*, (ed.) by Maggie Humm (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992).

diversified and popular. However, the beginning of this introduction to chapter one starts with a discussion of some crucial terms in feminist debates in order to lay the foundations for the conceptual framework of the study.

The terms ‘feminism’, ‘women’s movement’, ‘patriarchy’ and ‘postfeminism’ are controversial, not fixed, and defined differently for different perspectives and purposes. ‘Feminism’ has many faces. It becomes an even more complex concept in a cross-cultural perspective. The development of feminist thought in any context is conditioned by its social, political, and economic embeddedness as well as the larger cultural and historical context.² Feminists have focused on various issues depending on the social agenda, sometimes emphasizing social transformation, i.e. socialist feminism of the 1970s, at other times gender specific issues or issues of sexual difference. A fairly broad definition of feminism by Drude Dahlerup is used in this study which includes all ideologies, activities, and policies whose goal is to remove discrimination against women and to break down the male domination of society.³

The concept of the ‘women’s movement’ comprises all those individuals, organizations, networks, ideas, and practices that support feminist values and goals. It involves a number of diverse approaches, organizations and activities that have been influenced by feminist ideas. As Joni Lovenduski and Vicky Randall point out, the

² Susan Bassnett’s work on the women’s movement in four countries provides a good example. Bassnett concentrates on Britain, Italy, the German Democratic Republic and the United States, and examines the contexts and conditions in which feminism re-emerged in the late 1960s in these countries. By locating feminist movements in a historical context, Bassnett emphasizes the changing patterns of feminist thought and practices in four societies. Susan Bassnett, *Feminist Experiences: The Women’s Movement in Four Countries*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986).

³ Drude Dahlerup, *The New Women’s Movement: Feminism and Political Power in Europe and the USA* (Sage: London, 1986), p.6.

women's movement is itself made up of a number of different movements.⁴ For example, the revival of British feminism in the late 1960s was launched by the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM). The motive of the WLM was to 'liberate' women and to stop male oppression. The movement stressed the importance of women's individual identity and its 'sisterhood' slogan became the key word in the 1970s. Several different organizations have been founded over the last three decades which refer to different feminisms, such as liberal, socialist, radical. By the end of the 1970s, as will be discussed later, three main distinct strands of the women's movements were active: the two WLM tendencies of Radical and Socialist feminists, and the equal rights activists of the wider women's movements. In addition to this, in the 1980s the black women's movement and Greenham Common movement can be seen both as autonomous women's movements and as off-shoots of the WLM.

Women's movement discourses are explicitly directed against patriarchal power. 'Patriarchy' is undoubtedly a complex concept: it operates in the public and private spheres. For some feminists, the effects of a patriarchal ideology are mostly felt within the family environment. It is argued that it is the women's role as a mother and wife -caretaker and nurturer- within the family imposed by male ideology which guarantees the existence of the familial form. The emphasis has been on the ways in which patriarchal ideology naturalizes woman's place in the home and ignores woman's social contributions in the public domain.

⁴ Joni Lovenduski & Vicky Randall, *Contemporary Feminist Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1993) p.3.

There are different views among feminists about the mechanisms through which patriarchy is reproduced. In her influential work, *Theorising Patriarchy*⁵, Sylvia Walby structures the debate by formulating six distinct, though interrelated, patriarchal structures through which gender relations are constructed: paid employment, household production, culture, sexuality, violence and the state. She argues that there has been a shift in Britain from a predominantly private form of patriarchy to one in which the public structure of the state and market play a predominant role. Although her argument leaves many central issues unresolved, it has helped to bring a new approach to the patriarchy debate. There are indeed some forms of female subordination still evident in the public sphere in Britain, such as most women being paid less than men. Following the Equal Pay Act in 1970 a sharp rise was seen in women's earnings; however, towards the end of the 1970s the percentage of women's earnings compared to men's dropped again. One of the main reasons underlying the gap between men's and women's earnings is, as Ann Oakley and Juliet Mitchell note, 'occupational segregation between men and women'⁶. They point out that this segregation is strongly related to inequalities in pay, career prospects and employment protection. While this form of female subordination in the public sphere is the case in Turkey, as will be discussed in the following section, in some cases patriarchy is experienced and reproduced in different ways in Turkey than in Britain. Thus there is no single model of a patriarchal system instead there are different forms of patriarchal systems in one culture or across cultures.

⁵ Sylvia Walby, *Theorising Patriarchy*, (Oxford:Blackwell, 1990).

⁶ Ann Oakley and Juliet Mitchell (eds.), *Who's Afraid of Feminism*, (London: Penguin Books, 1997), (p.4).

Patriarchy was used rather unquestioningly to describe women's oppression for some time but with the impact of critical discourses on feminism, as will be examined later, some feminists have begun to challenge this very understanding of patriarchy as a critical concept. Recent thinking about power structures, particularly feminist appropriation of Foucault's theory of power, has stressed the importance of looking at other kinds of hierarchies such as race, class, sexuality, and gender to explain the complexities of women's oppression. For example, by referring to the early second wave feminist politics, Andrea Stuart points out that 'patriarchy as a concept has lost its totalising edge in contemporary feminist thought'⁷. Despite the ambiguities caused by the lack of a satisfactory theory of patriarchy, the term is used in this study to mean a traditional and systematic male dominance of women, both in the domestic sphere and in public matters.

The last concept to discuss in this introduction is postfeminism. 'Postfeminism' is a divisive concept which has caused controversy. In its common usage the term is a product of the 1980s and is seen, as Brooks states, 'as a result of the appropriation of the term by the media'⁸. The popular press, especially advertising and women's magazines, has played a significant role in redefining feminism and has inevitably added its own influential perspectives to the feminist debate. Thus postfeminism emerged during the 1980s in the West, as Goldman states, 'to designate a new generation of women who take for granted the victories secured by their elders, presuming their right to equitable treatment both in the workplace and at home, while

⁷ Andrea Stuart, 'Feminism: Dead or Alive', in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, (ed.) Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), p.36.

⁸ Brooks, 1997, p.2.

shunning the label of feminism’⁹. The ‘postfeminist woman’ is represented as the one who is highly paid in her career, who looks good, loves men and sex, and who sees feminism as dated and above all something she does not need. This new image, as formulated in the popular press, with short skirts, high heels, pillar-box red lips has altered the common stereotypical image of the ‘ugly’ feminist; ‘it is a feminism tailored to the demands of the commodity form’¹⁰. With these qualities the new woman image recreated a *new* ‘feminine style’ through which feminism is used as a commodity-sign for consumer goods.¹¹ Thus popular conception of postfeminism refers to, as Stacey states, ‘the simultaneous incorporation, revision, and depoliticisation of many of the central goals of second wave feminism’¹². Since this study deals with the popular deployment of the term ‘feminism’ and addresses its ramifications in popular culture, the use of ‘postfeminism’ with regard to the analysis of women’s magazines refers to the understanding of the concept discussed above.

The two British magazines analysed here, namely *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman*, define their discourse as postfeminist meaning, according to the editors, ‘a lot of the battles have been won’¹³, or ‘a woman’s right to choose anything about life’¹⁴; whereas their Turkish counterparts, *Kim* and *Kadınca*, do not. Detailed examination of

⁹ Robert Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially*. (London: Routledge, 1992). p. 130.

¹⁰ Goldman, 1992, p.130.

¹¹ Analysis of the Lux Soap advertisement in the case study provides a good example to illustrate the ways in which feminism is used as a commodity sign to sell the Lux Soap.

¹² Judith Stacey, ‘Sexism by a subtler name?’, *Socialist Review*, No 96, (September-October, 1987), pp. 7-28, (p.8).

¹³ See Appendix A, p.ii.

¹⁴ See Appendix A, p.v.

the four women's magazines in chapter three shows how they interpret 'feminism' and/or 'postfeminism' differently to redefine femininity in the 1990s.

Since the 1980s, from being a 'media invention', postfeminism has accrued diverse meanings, many of them still negative for some feminists.¹⁵ On the other hand, in academic circles postfeminism has come to denote postmodern or poststructuralist feminism. The term 'postfeminist' has come to indicate the view, which has gained currency in the early 1990s, that feminism is an untenable position theoretically.¹⁶ The issues of identity and subjectivity within feminist theorizing have been informed and transformed by a range of postmodern theories which are discussed in detail at the end of the first part of this chapter.

a) CONTEMPORARY BRITISH FEMINIST HISTORY AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Political Activism of Second Wave Feminism

The term 'second wave' describes a specific moment in history, and signifies a transformation in feminist bodies of knowledge. The term suggests a continuation of a movement, from the earlier phase of feminism during the first two decades of this century which demanded civic equality for women via the vote. The first wave

¹⁵ See, for example, Angela Neustatter, *Hyenas in Petticoats: A Look at Twenty Years of Feminism*, (London: Penguin, 1990).

¹⁶ It is indeed an ambiguous area for feminist scholars to position themselves. Various terms are used to situate them within these theoretical debates, such as postmodern feminist or feminist postmodernist. For further discussions of postfeminism in academic circles see the following writers: Toril Moi, 'Feminism and Postmodernism: Recent Feminist Criticism in the United States', in *British Feminist Thought: A Reader*, ed. Terry Lovell (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990); Tania Modleski, *Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a 'Postfeminist' Age*, (London: Routledge, 1991); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (London: Routledge, 1990).

achieved a gain in political and legal rights, and facilitated the possible future reform of the most inequitable aspects of social life. In the context of the 1960s, feminists believed that female subordination was more than an effect of dominant political forces; it was related to all social relations with men. As a consequence, a need emerged to review revolutionary strategies in order to explain and challenge the ideology of male dominance. Thus the central goal of second wave feminist activists, which Kristeva terms 'another generation' or 'new generation'¹⁷, was to change conventional definitions of what it meant to be a woman. The first widely reported activism was a protest against the Miss America contest in Atlantic City in 1968. The primary site of women's struggle, as characterized by this demonstration and proceeding ones, was the female body itself.

Among the sources of inspiration for second wave feminism were Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (first published in 1929) and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1946). It is suggested that the publication of Germaine Greer's book *The Female Eunuch* (1971) launched the 'second wave' of feminism in Britain. Greer's book spoke in an entirely new voice and informed the 1970s. She associated the first wave of feminists with middle-class women and declared that now the 'ungenteel middle-class' is calling for revolution. Greer underlined three aspects of women's subordination - patriarchal family values, women's domestic roles and motherhood, and women's sexuality- which were to become the focus of second wave feminism.

¹⁷ Julia Kristeva, 'Women's Time' in *The Kristeva Reader*, (ed.) Toril Moi (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 188-213.

There is a tendency among British feminist researchers¹⁸ to locate the political origins of the new women's movements in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, and among the women of International Socialists and the International Marxist Group. Both the women's liberation movement and the 'new left' focused on the individual and on self-emancipation. Consciousness raising activities played a key role in linking the self to others, because it was believed that personal experience could reveal dynamically a social reality. Progressive politics of 'the personal' was introduced by many feminist scholars who attempted to respond to the gap between the revolutionary practices of the women's liberation movement and theoretical debates from which women's voices were missing.¹⁹

In the early 1970s, feminists constructed networks of communication, conferences, demonstrations and newsletters, which crossed boundaries and emphasized aspects of women's commonality. While there was not just one dominant definition of feminism, there was a common understanding of feminism which was that women suffer injustice because of their sex. The emergence of the women's liberation movement attracted many women of an intellectual tendency and the first Women's Liberation Conference was held at Ruskin College Oxford in 1970.²⁰ It illustrated the strength of radical politics among feminists. A major success of the conference was its establishment of a National Women's Coordinating Committee which included all

¹⁸ See, for example, Vicky Randall, *Women and Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1987), (p.230).

¹⁹ For example, Ann Oakley and Juliet Mitchell (eds.) *The Rights or Wrongs of Women*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976); Sheila Rowbotham, *Woman's Consciousness Man's World*, (London: Penguin, 1987).

²⁰ Maggie Humm (ed.), *Feminisms: A Reader*, (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p.6.

the competing feminist positions. One of the outcomes of the conference was to urge the need for substantive research into women's history. The following demands were also adopted: alternatives to the nuclear family, equal pay, equal opportunities and education, twenty-four-hour nurseries, free contraception, and abortion on demand.²¹ Later these were expanded, as Smith notes, 'to include legal and financial independence, an end to discrimination against lesbians, to violence and sexual pressure' (ibid.). The Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) founded battered women's refuges (the first one in 1972) and rape crisis centres (1976) in order to defend women from sexual and domestic violence.²² These centres included health centres which worked to increase self-awareness about the female body and female sexuality. WLM established campaigns for free contraception, a full right to abortion and an end, through legislation, to all forms of sex discrimination.²³ These activities began to receive support from Trade Unions and municipalities, especially in big cities.

The time and patterns of increased women's rights vary due to the different social and cultural structures of the countries in question, Britain and Turkey. Through feminist political activism, British women gained certain rights in the early seventies, as seen in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Equal Pay Act 1970 (compliance with which was voluntary until 1975).²⁴ The Social Security Pensions Act 1975 and the 1983 extension of the Equal Pay Act abolished some of the items of discrimination

²¹ Harold L. Smith, *British Feminism in the Twentieth Century*, (Hants: Edward Elgar, 1990), p.194.

²² Humm, 1992, p. 6.

²³ For detailed information see *Sweet Freedom*, by A. Coote and B. Campbell, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

²⁴ Smith, 1990, p.194.

against employed and married women within the social security system, and made potential improvements in the wages of low-paid women.

Feminist political activism has taken different directions in the last two decades. The political context of the 1980s and 1990s can be identified as the major cause in this process through which deradicalisation of feminist activism became the centre of the debates among feminist circles.

Debates on the Deradicalisation of Feminist Activism in the Political Context of the 80s and 90s

The social and economic trends of the 1980s, and the specific contribution of 'Thatcherism' affected the women's movements in many ways. Many of the changes observed in British feminism in the 1980s and 1990s engendered an argument that the Women's Liberation Movement had become deradicalised during this period. Two processes are often identified as being responsible for these changes. The first is the fragmentation of feminism's core values. Fragmentation was understood in many ways, but mainly it meant that its boundaries became blurred with the establishment of women's studies from different disciplines and the involvement of a younger generation of women. Many of the second-wave movements' activists who were mobilized between end of the 1960s and the late 1970s are now middle-aged. This led to a generation gap between them and a younger generation of women who often perceived the older generation as strange and dated. Not only age, but also race,

ethnicity and sexuality have created conflicts between white/middle-class and other, 'marginalized' feminists.

The growing involvement of feminist groups with state agencies in the 1980s was seen as another cause for the deradicalisation of the feminist movements. Following the Conservative Party's victory in the 1979 general election, political opportunities altered the feminist movements in the 1980s. Conservative liberal policies, as Lovenduski and Randall note, 'made the labour movement more receptive to feminism; and long term shifts in family structure together with expanded possibilities for part-time work and certain government policies tended to increase women's *autonomy* without necessarily making them more *equal* to men'²⁵. While the policies of the Conservative government provided new opportunities for some women, it made life harder for the majority of women. As a result it gradually became common among (white, heterosexual) women to view feminism as if it had achieved its goals. Yet the most significant gender inequality remained in employment and income over this period and it is still the case. The enterprise culture of the Thatcherite ideology exploited women in the labour market so that the number of women in the labour force 'increased with the growth of part-time and contract labour'²⁶. This employment structure could offer women neither job security nor equality in wages. Nonetheless, wage inequality in full-time employment got better in the 1990s. For example, the proportion of women earning the same wage per hour as

²⁵ Lovenduski and Randall, 1993, p.363-364.

²⁶ Janet Newman, 'Enterprising Women: Images of Success' in *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies*, (eds.) Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury & Jackie Stacey, (London: HarperCollinsAcademic, 1991), pp. 241-59, (p.256).

men rose from 73 per cent in 1981 to 80 per cent in 1995.²⁷ But it should be pointed out that this narrowing of the wage gap is largely restricted to full-time workers. As Sylvia Walby notes, there are very significant inequalities and differences between full-time and part-time work. For instance, part-time work is on average paid significantly less than full-time work, and has fewer fringe benefits. (ibid.) Britain has become a world leader in the field of part-time work for women: in the mid-1990s, part-time work was five times as common among women as among men; twice as many men as women work full-time.²⁸ Considering the fact that 'part-time women earned only 60 per cent of men's full-time hourly rates in 1995',²⁹ gender inequality still remains in employment and income in Britain.

There might be complex reasons for deradicalisation but, as Lovenduski & Randall emphasize, 'the changes in the orientation both of many women's groups and of local government'³⁰ - especially the establishment of the Greater London Council Women's Committee and Unit in 1982- were significant. In the early years of the Conservative government, state agencies supported and encouraged feminist initiatives; however, later there were drawbacks to this development. This resulted in a more positive development in the feminist penetration of mainstream institutions, especially in the case of the Labour Party and trade unions (both the Labour Party and feminists benefited from this integration as the Labour Party won the 1997 general election with over 100 women MPs in parliament). Despite the efforts of the conservative

²⁷ Sylvia Walby, *Gender Transformations*, (London: Routledge, 1997), p.31.

²⁸ Central Statistical Office, *Social Focus on Women*, (London: HMSO, 1995).

²⁹ Walby, 1997, p.32.

³⁰ Lovenduski and Randall, 1993, p.12.

governments to cut back resources, and to impose a more traditional role for women, feminist politics and values had become increasingly influential within the media and in academic life during this period.

The deradicalisation of the feminist movements increased feminist activity in a range of political arenas, feminist issues became concerns of mainstream institutions. The increasing engagement of feminists with mainstream politics played an important part in the steady diffusion of feminist values. For example, 'in the areas of rape, and domestic violence, the influence of feminist values is especially evident in the introduction of considerable improvements in police and legal procedures'³¹. The diffusion of feminist values occurred not only in legal matters but also in politics, education, popular culture, media etc., and undoubtedly created and combined both negative and positive images of feminists. The most problematic and controversial one is perhaps their treatment in popular culture. For example, feminist politics and values may seem to be reduced to super-individualist, consumer feminism and to be far removed from the early feminist ideals. However, as Shelagh Young points out, feminist politics are seen to be largely a matter of common sense and paradoxically resistance against feminism is 'a measure of the force of feminism's impact upon contemporary cultural forms and practices'³². As will be examined in the case study, for example, women's magazines offer discussions concerning different women's issues, such as health, employment, sex, etc. that women in all kinds of situations may use to assert and empower themselves.

³¹ Lovenduski and Randall, 1993, p.358.

³² Shelagh Young, 'Feminism and Politics of Power' in *The Female Gaze*, (eds.) Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment (London: The Women's Press, 1988), pp. 173-188, (p. 174).

Feminist scholars have evaluated the effect of this long period of conservative rule in a variety of ways. For example, some feminists argue that the repressive social policies of Conservative governments between 1979-1997 have reinforced existing sexist, racist and classist practices. Coppock's *et al.* comments on this period are quite insightful and provide a basis for feminist debates in the 1990s: 'far from promoting equality of opportunity, a "consumer culture" has been created. The language of "the market" and the dominance of individualism has spread like a cancer to every corner of social policy-making'³³. 'Individualism' was the key concept for conservative liberal policies, thus promotion of individual freedom broadened social, sexual and racial differences during this period. One of the outcomes of these policies is that Britain remains the only member of the European Community to oppose the Charter of Fundamental Social Rights which, among other things, guarantees fair wages and equal treatment for men and women. Considering the fact that the majority (86%) of part-time workers are women, this means employed women not only earn much less than men but also do not have full social security rights. Feminist argument for equal pay for equal work has therefore confronted more complex issues; for example, it focuses on women's part-time work and how industry exploits it. In addition to the low status of women in employment, Social Security Acts introduced widespread financial cut-backs in the 1980s and this left women as well as children and young people vulnerable.

³³ Coppock *et al.*, 1995, p.174.

Consequently, the liberal economy policies of the Thatcher administration, making the welfare state smaller and promoting privatisation, oppressed women more as they were encouraged to keep their domestic roles as mothers, wives and homemakers which was well exemplified in the government's refusal to fund childcare. This demonstrates that conservative governments assumed that women were functional for the maintenance of familial stability and thus its ideology worked in a way to reaffirm gendered assumptions about women's place in society. Through the conservative policies of the 1980s, feminist values were re-interpreted by capitalism and patriarchy, and of course by some feminists, and in the 1990s these were re-presented to (privileged) women as a matter of 'choice'. This issue will be discussed in detail later.

By the end of the 1980s, political and economic changes associated with Thatcherism had allowed some people to make a generalization and to announce the death of the women's movements in Britain. Judgements made on the decline of feminist activism during the 1980s, as Lovenduski and Randall who studied contemporary feminist politics argued, 'have meaning only when they specify how terms are being used'. They state that 'there is little doubt that WLM as it was known in the 1980s did decline but it is also clear that important aspects of feminism gained in strength'³⁴. Indeed, its important aspects for contemporary women are evolving through a number of intellectual and political sources.

³⁴ Lovenduski and Randall, 1993, p.4-5.

When a number of feminist scholars argue that the visible national feminist movements have declined since the 1980s in Britain, they base their arguments on the facts that the number of activists are getting fewer, old networks are disappearing, women's centres are closing down, women's newsletters are decreasing. There might seem to be a contradiction in the above debates; while feminist values appeared to be growing, the debate over the decline of feminism emerged. One of the important factors can be seen as the conflict between Radical and Socialist feminists, and between white feminists and black women's movements. There was also a conflict about integrating and working with state agencies. Women who made their way in mainstream institutions had been strongly criticized by other women. The same situation happened in Turkey especially when a group of feminists started working for and with the Women's Directorate. These conflicts among feminists increased a process of fragmentation that already existed in the diversity of its concerns.

The deradicalisation of feminism raised a question as to whether there is a need for feminism. *The Guardian* interviewed a group of women writers, journalists and politicians and asked the following question: 'Do we still need feminism?'³⁵. The contributors stated that feminism achieved certain things in the last thirty years yet there is gross inequality and a massive way to go. One of the interviewees, Marcelle d'Argy Smith, former editor of British *Cosmopolitan*, argues that 'most women loathe the name feminist - it is not sexy or glamorous - so they deny they are one. Yet women today want respect, with equal pay, equal opportunities, equal parenting and

³⁵ *The Guardian*, 9 September, 1996, p.7.

equal power in parliament - which is feminism' (ibid.). She criticizes British women for not risking alienating men, as they still think that to be pro-women is to be anti-men and suggests that they have to learn that they can be intelligent and independent, and still be liked by men. Her view indicates how the word feminism has been misinterpreted and disassociated from women's needs and also the way in which *Cosmopolitan*, the leading women's magazine in Britain, receives and promotes feminism in the 1990s.

Feminism's heterogeneity is open to diverse interpretations; it might be perceived as a developing and challenging body of thought but at the same time potentially destructive. Diversification of feminist thought in the 1980s helped feminists in the academy to articulate their own position in relation to other forms of academic and political discourse. This wide spectrum of theoretical awareness has led feminists to consider more urgently the increased separation between feminist theory and feminist politics and how to produce a more convincing link between them. Whelehan presents a positive view and argues that

...feminism has the theoretical maturity to reflect upon its own process as recent feminist theory has been to interrogate internal divisions as a feature of its critique, particularly in a recognition of the importance of theorizing about and reflecting upon the significance of conflicting subject-positions within feminism.³⁶

The development of different theoretical approaches to feminist debates and their connection with the feminist practice will be discussed below in a wider context in two sections.

³⁶ Whelehan, 1995, p.127.

Feminist Politics and Diversification of Feminist Discourses

The wide range of feminist political activism and debates had a major impact on the direction of feminist theories and analyses. In the earlier days, the strength of the movement was reflected in the publication of a number of influential texts (Rowbotham, 1973; Mitchell, 1971; Greer, 1970; Millett, 1970), and also feminist journals like *Shrew* (1969), *Spare Rib* (1972), *WIRES* (1975). These writers pointed to the need to re-evaluate what patriarchy meant and to examine why and how male dominance in the public and private spheres has become such a naturalized aspect of social life.

Later in the 1980s, feminist research carried out within sociology³⁷ and political science³⁸ asserted that the very way science constructed knowledge was gendered and thus this led feminists to a search for feminist methodologies and alternative ways of defining subject-object relationships in social research.³⁹ This rich body of feminist work, as Deniz Kandiyoti points out, 'provided the initial challenge to mainstream social science and made women visible as historical, social, economic and political

³⁷ Rosemary Compton and Michael Mann (eds.), *Gender and Stratification* (Cambridge: Polity press, 1986); Judith Stacey and Barrie Thorne, 'The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology', *Social Problems*, Vol. 32, 1985, pp. 301-16.

³⁸ Susan Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*, (London: Virago, 1980); Carol Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988); Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell (eds.) *Feminism as Critique: Essays in the Politics of Gender in Late Capitalism*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

³⁹ Judith Stacey, 'Can there be a feminist ethnography?', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1988, pp. 21-7; Shulamith Reinharz, 'Experiential analysis: a contribution to feminist research' in *Theories of Women's Studies*, (eds.) G Bowles and D. Klein, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983).

actors'⁴⁰. Through this expanding work of feminist academics, feminist theory has come to be recognized as an academic discourse.

Although feminists reached substantial agreement among themselves on what the main issues for feminism were, like any other political movement, feminists faced internal power struggles. Over the last three decades, feminism has had several strands that have operated in different spheres at different times in Britain. Diverse political schools of thought have had an impact in the formation of different strands of feminist thought. There is a tendency to describe the main policy areas associated with liberal, socialist and radical feminism. They differ about the roots of female oppression as well as in their forms of organization and methods of fighting against the oppression. As the editorial of *Feminist Review* put it 'feminists have learned - often painfully - that women's liberation...has no single point of origin; it is born in a diversity of times and places'⁴¹. The three main streams of feminist thought have been discussed and examined extensively in Britain.⁴² The arguments of these three strands are briefly outlined which will hopefully provide a basis with which to examine changes in the nature of feminist theoretical debates in the last three decades in Britain.

⁴⁰ Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Contemporary Feminist Scholarship and Middle East Studies' in *Gendering the Middle East*, (ed.) Deniz Kandiyoti, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), pp. 1-27 (p. 4).

⁴¹ *Feminist Review*, No. 31, Spring 1989, p.2.

⁴²For example see April Carter, *The Politics of Women's Rights* (London: Longman, 1988); David Bouchier, *The Feminist Challenge* (London: Macmillan, 1983); S. Rowbotham, L. Segal, H. Wainwright, *Beyond the Fragments* (London: Merlin, 1979).

Liberal feminism, which grew from nineteenth century intellectual roots, was the first social theory that offered the possibility of sex equality. Liberals argue that women and men are not the same but differentiation in society should not be based on gender. Liberal feminists believe that 'the elimination of gender-base differentiation is a sensible objective for society as a whole as well as for women; labour markets, for example, would be more rational as well as fairer to women and men would be freer to enjoy the pleasures of family life.'⁴³ The liberal-democratic tradition put an emphasis on marginal reform rather than fundamental change. The primary objective was 'equality of opportunity' which means achieving gender equality through legislative and policy reform. It prioritises personal development over radical changes in the institutionalised power relations. Liberal feminism became more influential in the political environment of the 1980s and this has made the distinctions between feminist political strategies less clear. Lovenduski and Randall suggest that 'Liberal feminism is better understood as a strategy rather than as a movement'⁴⁴ and they show in their study that it is a strategy that has steadily gained support from feminists. Women who claim to be Liberal feminists aim to promote and integrate women into public life, but as will be discussed later, this has created disputes between feminists over different understandings of feminism and feminist politics.

Liberal feminists have been criticized by socialist feminists for suggesting legal reforms to emancipate women from male domination. Socialist feminists are concerned with the situation of women in capitalist economic relations, including

⁴³ Smith, 1990 p.190.

⁴⁴ Lovenduski and Randall, 1993, p.7.

labour force and family. They argue that patriarchal capitalism must be questioned in terms of how it constructs gender relations and also how its material conditions support male and class domination. For socialist feminism, capitalism is seen as the main problem in gender inequality and discrimination. But as Rowbotham *et al.*⁴⁵ examine extensively, socialist feminists also question left-wing organizations which fail to recognize gender as a significant issue in the class struggle. This was also a significant motivation for socialist women in the early 1980s in Turkey to form their own women's groups which aimed to stand against their socialist men as well as the patriarchal ideology imposed by the state.

For radical feminists, the traditional socialist theory and practice was regarded as insufficient to explain women's oppression. Like socialist feminists, the concept of patriarchy is central to radical feminists but they see men as the primary source of women's oppression. However, their analyses are also concerned with similar issues such as the social construction of femininity and sexuality, women's rights of control over reproduction and problems of sexual violence. In order to become free from the dominant male class, radicals claim that lesbianism can be considered not only as the freedom to express your sexuality but also as an essential political practice for feminists. The concept of political lesbianism took root in the 1970s and the slogan 'feminism is the theory: lesbianism is the practice' was coined.⁴⁶ In comparison to Britain, it is interesting to note that there has never been a belief by any strand of Turkish feminists that lesbianism could be a political practice in Turkey. It is only

⁴⁵ Rowbotham, Segal and Wainwright, 1979.

⁴⁶ Ti-Grace Atkinson, cited in Maggie Humm, *The Dictionary of Feminist Theory*, (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p.118.

recently that lesbianism as a sexual choice has begun to be discussed within Turkish feminist circles.

Radical feminist issues gained importance on the feminist agenda by the mid-1970s. The emphasis shifted away from the reformist priorities of liberal feminist politics and redirected attention towards power centres and power relations.⁴⁷ The question of domestic labour was linked to the radical strand of feminism and the following issues were raised: men exercising power over women because they are men; control over reproduction, sexuality and violence against women. Campaigns around these issues were organized by radical feminists but that is not to say liberal and socialist feminists were against these campaigns. Violence against women, freedom of sexuality, paid work, abortion, contraception, the family, the sexual division of labour have been priority issues in feminist politics among all strands since the late 1970s.

Today, the term 'feminism' has become a very different phenomenon to that of the end of the 1970s. It has been marginalized and redefined, often under the banner of 'postfeminism'. Seventies feminism searched for structural causes of women's oppression and believed in women's shared interests. While recent feminist theories tend to problematize the notion of 'woman', the notion of oppression seems to be treated as dated. In contrast to seventies feminism, nineties feminism, as Lynne Segal describes,

'has replaced what is seen as the naive search for the social causes of

⁴⁷ Vicki Coppock, Deena Haydon & Ingrid Richter, *The Illusions of 'Post-feminism': New Women, Old Myths*, (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995), p. 16.

women's oppression with abstract elaborations of the discursively produced, hierarchical constitution of an array of key concepts: sexual difference in particular, binary oppositions in general, and the hetero/sexualized mapping of the body as a whole'.⁴⁸

However, concentration on certain issues like equality, autonomy, difference, and identity still continue to be distinctive components of feminist thinking in a more sophisticated way. Seventies feminism, as Lynne Segal states, 'has little to do with dogmatic certitudes, conceptual closure, binary thinking, identity politics or false universalism, and much more to do with the floundering fortunes of grassroots or movement politics in harsh and unyielding times'.⁴⁹ I will now discuss current feminist theories with an emphasis on identity politics in order to provide an intellectual context for the popularisation of feminism in women's magazines and the construction of female identity in these texts.

Theoretical Challenges: Issues of Identity and Difference in Feminist Theorising

As discussed previously, early second-wave western feminist discourses assumed a shared oppression that united women in their struggle for liberation. This idea had been based on a very specific identity, that of white, middle-class, highly educated and often heterosexual women. The goals and demands of women's liberation movements were called into question by groups of women whose interests were not represented. Liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism attempted to systematize individual understandings about the oppression of women into coherent

⁴⁸ Lynne Segal, 'Generations of Feminism', *Radical Philosophy*, no 83 (May - June 1997) pp. 6-16, (p.6).

⁴⁹ Segal, 1997, p.10.

theories of patriarchy. Assumptions about the universality of women's oppression were criticized by some feminists like Eisenstein and Ramazanoglu who argued that they tended towards a biological essentialism that provided a limited basis for an understanding of historical and cultural variations.⁵⁰ Women's liberation movements were not primarily concerned with theorizing differences between women, but with concentrating instead on inequalities or differences between women and men.

As the debates and the process of theorizing extended, feminist analyses started to involve increasing numbers of women through the media, courses, groups and campaigns. It gave rise to debates within feminist circles as it was acknowledged by some feminists that women's experiences of subordination and oppression were not universal. Black women's groups who challenged the Eurocentrism of white British feminist theory informed British feminism in the 1980s. As Humm notes, 'the Organization of Women of African and Asian Decent (OWAAD) founded in 1978, attacked racist immigration laws and focused on Third World issues as well as issues of Black British identity at the National Black Women's Conference in Brixton in 1979'.⁵¹

Furthermore as feminist studies expanded and developed on a world scale, it was increasingly acknowledged that the specific cultural conceptions of women diverge. Issues pertaining to gender, class and inequalities increasingly appeared on a international research agenda. Feminist researchers from non-Western countries

⁵⁰ Hester Eisenstein, *Contemporary Feminist Thought*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984); Caroline Ramazanoglu, *Feminism and the Contradictions of Oppression*, (London: Routledge, 1989).

⁵¹ Humm, 1992, p.6.

started making use of the major insights gained from Western feminist theory. While some researchers emphasized local relevance⁵², many of them highlighted the specificity of non-Western women's experiences and called into question the validity of existing feminist theories originating from mainly white, middle-class Western scholars⁵³.

Feminist debates over the last two decades have illustrated that women from different races, classes, cultures, sexualities, nationalities, and religions experience oppression differently and from different sources. The impact of these factors came to be recognized as significant in the oppression of women. All the mentioned factors were regarded as structuring the social meanings of femininity in society. Teresa de Lauretis points to the developing nature of feminist theory and says,

feminist theory is not merely a theory of gender oppression...It is instead a developing theory of the female-sexed or female-embodied subject, whose constitution and whose modes of social and subjective existence include most obviously sex and gender, but also race, class, and any other significant socio-cultural divisions and representations; a developing theory of the female-embodied social subject that is based on its specific, emergent, and conflictual history.⁵⁴

Consequently, recognition of diversities among women in feminist theorizing reduced the risk for feminine identity to become homogenized or to marginalize many women (coloured, lesbian, working-class) from the feminist movements. Indeed, women from

⁵² Irene Tinker (ed.), *Persistent Inequalities: Women and World Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Kate Young, Carol Wolkowitz and Rosslyn McCullagh (eds.), *Of Marriage and the Market: Women's Subordination in International Perspective*, (London: CSE Books, 1981).

⁵³ Chandra Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses', *Feminist Review*, 30 Autumn 1988, pp. 61-88; bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, (Boston: South End Press, 1984); Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Contextualizing feminism - gender, ethnic and class divisions' in *British Feminist Thought*, (ed.) Terry Lovell, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

⁵⁴ Teresa de Lauretis, 'Upping the anti(sic) in feminist theory' in *The Cultural Studies Reader* (ed.) Simon During, (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 74-89, (p.89).

different races, classes or generations struggled to see their own priorities represented on the feminist agenda, which was the province of highly educated, white middle-class heterosexual women, and found it unresponsive to their needs and experiences. The seriousness of some conflicts in feminist politics came to be realized when black women, lesbians and working-class women used feminist discourses to articulate their exclusion from its mainstream. Until the end of the 1970s, issues of racism and sexism -instead of being tackled on an institutional, societal basis - tended to be reduced to a personalized level. This implies that, as Stuart states, 'racism was seen as a problem only for black women'⁵⁵. Thus, claims of a universal, transcultural experience in the discourses of second-wave feminism became irrelevant for some feminists as they were not able to provide sufficient tools to account for culturally divergent experience between different groups of women.

Feminists of colour and lesbian feminists have had a profound influence on the new wave of feminist thought and action.⁵⁶ Their works have been particularly important in persuading other feminists of the need to focus on the political and theoretical implications of women's experiences. It has become generally accepted to think of women as a group of individuals who do not share the same social experience. Black women's critical challenges have led many feminists to investigate how women constitute hierarchies of power and privilege among themselves and to ask how they can combine the shared experiences of all women as well as acknowledge their

⁵⁵ Stuart, 1990, p.35.

⁵⁶ See for instance bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, (Boston: South End Press, 1984); Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Contextualizing feminism - gender, ethnic and class divisions' in *British Feminist Thought*, (ed.) Terry Lovell, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

differences. As Imelda Whelehan puts it, 'the existence of active debate confirms the richness of feminist discourse which is constantly diversifying and shifting ground in an effort to undercut the hegemony of male discourse'⁵⁷. Consequently, interventions of other discourses into white, heterosexual discourse have been helpful in extending the confines of feminist politics and theories. Female difference, the notion of female identity, became a primary objective of feminist analyses.

Female difference was analysed from a wide range of approaches from feminist psychoanalysis to women-centred approaches to history, society, literature, philosophy and culture. In psychoanalysis, for instance, the work of Luce Irigaray on the feminine imaginary and Hélène Cixous' theory of feminine writing offers a challenge to the patriarchal symbolic order. They argue that women's difference is not represented by the patriarchal symbolic order, nor are women's interests served by the laws and language of this order.⁵⁸

Freud has been recognized by some feminist researchers 'as the first theorist to bring the question of sexuality to the fore and to show that sexual identity is socially constituted rather than biologically innate'⁵⁹. Following this argument Juliet Mitchell, in her book *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*⁶⁰, points out that gendered subjectivity can

⁵⁷ Whelehan, 1995, p.21.

⁵⁸ Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, Trans. C. Porter and C. Burke, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985, original 1977); Hélène Cixous, 'Sorties', in *The Newly Born Woman*, (eds.) Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clement, Trans. Betsy Wing, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

⁵⁹ Steve Burniston, Frank Mort and Christine Weedon, 'Psychoanalysis and the Cultural Acquisition of Sexuality and Subjectivity' in *Women Take Issue*, Women's Studies Group Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, (London: Hutchinson & University of Birmingham, 1978), pp. 109-132, (p.109).

⁶⁰ Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1976).

be seen as constituted ideologically, ensuring the continual reproduction of dominant masculinity and dominated femininity. Mitchell argues that psychoanalysis provides the best means of understanding this process.

Women-centred approaches to history, society, and culture have attempted to recontextualize the female subject and female cultural production. Women-centred research 'aims to establish alternative traditions of women's cultural production and to (re)write women's history'⁶¹. Women-centred feminist politics finds its strongest expression in cultural feminism which suggests 'women's creativity as something different from male culture to the point where there could be no overlap between male and female cultures' (ibid.). Some cultural feminists celebrated female difference and valued female natural characteristics over male characteristics. The focus on difference in women-centred research led to the exploration of the question whether female difference is natural or cultural. Feminist theory has revolved mainly around essentialist and anti-essentialist debates since the 1980s.

For essentialists, the notion of 'essential womanhood' is common to all women who are suppressed and repressed by patriarchy and is the basis upon which a political action can be based. Their argument, which had its origin in modernist discourses, refers to 'female nature' that all women share. Some feminist writers, such as Irigaray and Cixous, are concerned with essentially female modes of representation. They assume the existence of a naturally different female or feminine language. This

⁶¹ Chris Weedon, *Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p.22.

language is often rooted in female biology or a female imaginary and it is thought to enable women to articulate an identity freed from patriarchal colonization.⁶²

The concept of woman as a uniform group proved an inadequate foundation for some feminists, either as a theory or a framework for activism. The question of differences between women has been added to the question of women's difference from men. The recognition of difference has become an important political issue in feminist theory and politics. The notion of difference was associated with the emergence of identity politics within feminist movements. It was realized, as Teresa de Lauretis suggested, that 'sisterhood is powerful but difficult'⁶³. Both these points, women being the universal fact and the cultural variation, constitute problems for feminist scholars to theorize. In her article 'Women's Time'⁶⁴ Kristeva explicitly underlines this theoretical development in feminism and emphasizes the multiplicity of female expressions and preoccupations so as not to homogenize 'woman', while at the same time insisting on the necessary recognition of sexual difference.

The notion of oppression was not abandoned, but feminist criticism began to problematize the construction of gendered subjectivities and identities rather than analysing it in terms of structures and systems. As Michèle Barrett points out the focus shifted from class to culture, from structure to agency; from a concern with

⁶² Weedon, 1999, p. 23.

⁶³ Teresa de Lauretis, 'Feminist Studies/Critical Studies: Issues, Terms and Contexts', *Feminist Studies / Critical Studies*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p.7.

⁶⁴ Kristeva, 1986, p.13.

systematic gender divisions to a concern with gender identities based on difference.⁶⁵

The recognition of different identities raises some questions for feminist politics: if all women do not share the experience of subordination, and if some women oppress other women, how can there be a politics of women's liberation?

The issues of identity and subjectivity within feminist theorizing are closely related to issues of epistemology and the relationship between feminist knowledge and women's experience.⁶⁶ Current feminist epistemological and methodological debates have been both informed and transformed by a range of postmodern theories. Chris Weedon groups these theories under the heading of poststructuralism which draws on the work of Derrida, Lacan, Foucault, Deleuze, Irigaray and Kristeva (some mutually contradictory).⁶⁷ The broad mix of influences have provided feminism with, as Brooks states, 'a range of critical frameworks, including "deconstruction", "discourse" and "difference", which have been used to challenge and refine traditional assumptions of identity and subjectivity'.⁶⁸

In line with the poststructuralist argument that the subject is not unitary and fixed but is discontinuous and fragmented, some feminists questioned the notion of the unity of

⁶⁵ Michèle Barrett, 'Words and things: materialism and method in contemporary feminist analysis' in *Destabilising Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, (eds.) Michèle Barrett and Ann Phillips, (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992), pp. 201-19.

⁶⁶ Western women's liberation movements from their earlier days valued women's experiences. Feminist identity politics rested on the epistemological position that experience produces knowledge directly, reality is immediately knowable without the mediation of concepts or theory. Nickie Charles, 'Feminist Practices: Identity, Difference, Power' in *Practising Feminism: Identity, Difference, Power*, (eds.) Nickie Charles and Felicia Hghes-Freeland, (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 1-37 (p.6).

⁶⁷ Weedon, 1999, p.3.

⁶⁸ Ann Brooks, *Postfeminisms: Feminism, Cultural Theory and Cultural Forms*, (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 21.

women as a self-evident category and their 'oppression' as a unitary phenomenon. The common concern of poststructuralism and feminism is the issue of subjectivity. Poststructuralist theories reject the humanist notion of a 'conscious, knowing, unified, rational'⁶⁹ subject and question the possibility of any essential self or essential identity. This position conceptualises subjectivity and identity as socially constructed and contradictory rather than essential and unified. In her discussion of diaspora and identity Avtar Brah states that 'identities are marked by the multiplicity of subject positions that constitute the subject. Hence identity is neither fixed nor singular; rather it is a constantly changing relational multiplicity'⁷⁰.

Conceptualisation of subjectivity in this way by feminist poststructuralists poses a radical challenge to essentialist debates. According to this view, categories such as 'female' and 'male' are not fixed by nature but instead are culturally and socially constructed and vary considerably across cultures and historical moments. They see differences between male and female cultures as historically produced. This anti-essentialist position of feminist poststructuralism offers, according to Weedon, 'a contextualization of experience and an analysis of its constitution and ideological power'⁷¹. As Weedon suggests, the advantage of this strategy points to the fact that an awareness of the contradictory nature of subjectivity emphasizes the possibility of choice in different situations and between different discourses. As will be discussed in the case study later, appropriation of this strategy by the women's magazine discourses is mainly reduced to the choice of consumption.

⁶⁹ Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p.21.

⁷⁰ Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 123.

⁷¹ Weedon, 1987, p. 125.

Deconstructive approaches to gender tend to draw on the Derridean theory of textuality and reading. Derrida's destabilization of logocentrism and binary oppositions appeared to be relevant for feminist theoretical projects. His deconstructive techniques suggest that if feminist theory is to succeed in its challenge to phallogentric discourses it cannot do so from a position outside of phallogentrism. Elizabeth Grosz points to the usefulness of Derrida's work for feminism and argues that

"the deconstructive project" refines and develops the feminist challenge to phallogentrism which is a subcategory of logocentrism... Logocentrism is implicitly patriarchal; the very structure of binary oppositions is privileged by the male/non-male (i.e. female) distinction.⁷²

Resistance to male dominated 'universal' theories, Angela Miles writes, 'requires that the resulting oppressive "binary oppositions" be deconstructed/deferred/reversed/displaced rather than affirmed/transformed/transcended',⁷³. According to this position, deconstruction contributes to the challenge to hierarchical and oppositional power relations and the dissolution of binary oppositions into a form which is not fixed. As a result it could mobilize another ordering system through which the nature of identity and subjectivity can be problematized and opened to in-depth analysis.

The other poststructuralist approach to gender is the work of Foucault on subjectivity, the body, discourse, and power. The work of Foucault has changed the content and

⁷² Elizabeth Grosz, 'Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity', in *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct*, (ed.) S. Grew, (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 101.

⁷³ Angela Miles, *Integrative Feminisms: Building Global Visions, 1960s-1990s*, (London: Routledge, 1996) p. 73.

the focus of the 'power-knowledge' debate within feminism. Poststructuralist feminists appropriate Foucauldian forms of poststructuralism to show, as Weedon notes, 'how foundationalist categories such as the body, nature and the normal are discursively produced and are effects of power'⁷⁴. This approach suggests that embodied subjectivity is an effect of discourses that produce multiple and often contradictory modes of subjectivity (ibid.). According to Foucault, discourses, such as psychology, biology, medicine, ethics, pedagogy, emerge from localized centres of power and from networks which together constitute an overall strategy.

Foucault challenges the notion that there is any such thing as sex outside of the range of discourses. The work of Foucault has inspired feminism's investigation of the categories 'woman' and 'gender', as well as 'patriarchy' and 'oppression'. Postmodern feminists, in particular Judith Butler⁷⁵, have made similar arguments, suggesting that there can be no concept of sex outside of gender; there is only gender. Butler identifies the category of 'woman' as the central difficulty for many feminist theorists. Rather than having an essential meaning, in different cultures it means different things to be a woman. In addition, it was argued that women not only differ from each other, but women's identities are themselves fragmented. (As will be discussed in the case study, women's magazines as popular cultural texts provide a good example for the fragmented nature of women's identities.) Mary Poovey suggests that 'by deconstructing the term "woman" into a set of independent variables, this strategy can show how consolidating all women into a falsely unified

⁷⁴ Weedon, 1999, p. 116.

⁷⁵ For instance, *Gender Trouble*, (London: Routledge, 1990).

“woman” has helped mask the operations of power that actually divide women’s interest as much as unite them’⁷⁶. Similarly some other postmodern feminist theorists reject the possibility of defining women altogether and argue that ‘the politics of gender or sexual difference must be replaced with a plurality of difference where gender loses its position of significance’⁷⁷. Moreover it is argued that the category ‘woman’ not only creates a danger of minimizing differences and diversity in women’s experience but also leaves women outside or invisible in mainstream forms of knowledge.⁷⁸

One of the reasons why feminism has started to investigate or deconstruct its own categories is that, as Brooks suggests, feminism relatively failed to realize the problem of gender equality as part of its goals.⁷⁹ She adds that previously established categories have been shown to be inadequate in reflecting inequalities amongst women, particularly differences of class, race, sexual orientation and physical ability. Indeed, poststructuralist critiques have been valuable in providing a vocabulary for feminists struggling with the limitations of earlier approaches. Commenting on the relevance of the poststructuralist critique of subjectivity to black identity politics, for example, bell hooks suggests that ‘critiques of essentialism which challenge notions of universality and static over-determined identity within mass culture and mass consciousness can open new possibilities for the construction of self and the assertion

⁷⁶ Mary Poovey, ‘Feminism and Deconstruction’, *Feminist Studies* 14, 1 (Spring 1988), p.58.

⁷⁷ L. Alcoff, ‘Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory’, *Sings* 13 (3) 1988, pp. 405-37, (p. 407).

⁷⁸ Re-conceptualisation of gender and sex in theoretical debates has affected the issue of naming women’s studies, it has become increasingly popular within the academy to replace ‘women’ with the term ‘gender’ since the late 1980s.

⁷⁹ Brooks, 1997, p.40.

of agency'⁸⁰. hooks' point is also relevant to female identity politics. As the analysis of the women's magazines shows in this study, there is a parallel with anti-essentialist feminist theoretical perspective and mass cultural products with regard to opening new possibilities for the construction of female identities.

Consequently, what feminist movements and postmodernism have in common is the process of dismantling dominant hegemonic discourses. In the process they both seek to develop alternative epistemological positions. McRobbie presents a positive view about feminism's intersection with postmodernism and argues that the value of postmodernism's contribution lies in its rejection of the idea of 'one voice'; in its willingness to examine 'the relatively unnavigated political continent which lies "beyond equality and difference"'; in its 'engagement with the politics of difference'; and in its 'abandonment of the search for the "real me"'⁸¹.

However, the way poststructuralist and postmodern forms of feminism have responded to the problem of 'woman' in contemporary feminist theory has been criticized by many feminists.⁸² Carol A. Stabile argues, for instance, that 'anti-essentialist feminism has now moved on to something like the postmodernist blindness to anything but difference'⁸³. What it seems to suggest is that following postmodernist argument 'the real' no longer refers to any concrete, objective reality,

⁸⁰ bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*, (Boston: South End Press, 1990), p. 29.

⁸¹ Angela McRobbie, *Postmodernism and Popular Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 64.

⁸² For example, recent radical feminist criticisms to postmodernism can be found in *Radically Speaking: Feminisms Reclaimed* (eds.) Diane Bell and Renate Klein, (London: Zed Books, 1996).

⁸³ Carol A. Stabile, 'Postmodernism, Feminism and Marx: Notes From the Abyss' in *Monthly Review: An Independent Socialist Magazine*, (July-August, 1995), p.4. Obtained from CD-Rom Social Science Source.

current trends in feminism are dissolving the category ‘woman’ into a ‘discursive’ construct. She says ‘it is so fragmented and variable’, and adds that, ‘it is hard to see how it could be the basis for a political project’ (ibid.). Ayse Düzkan, a well known feminist activist and journalist in Turkey, points to a similar development among Turkish feminist groups and says that ‘to the extent fragmentation of women’s identities (i.e. Islamist, Kemalist, Kurdish, radical) has taken place, different feminist groups have come to believe that there is no common agenda to act together. Each group feels that they need to keep their own agenda and position themselves against others’⁸⁴ (Emergence of diverse feminist discourses and fragmentation of women’s identities are discussed in the second part of this chapter where contemporary Turkish feminist thought is examined.) She comments that feminism is not about expressing diverse women’s identities but is about acknowledging shared oppression of diverse women.

Stabile warns against the fact that the abstract (language and discourse) opposition between essentialism and anti-essentialism has produced much theory, but has precluded practice. Barbara L. Marshall makes a similar point: ‘the refusal of a “subject” for feminist theory leads to serious problems with the status of poststructuralist feminism as a political project’⁸⁵. Teresa de Lauretis also finds it problematic and points to the necessity to theorize experience (subjectivity) in relation to practices, and stresses the importance of the understanding of gendered

⁸⁴ Ayse Düzkan, ‘Hareket Nereye?’, *Pazartesi*, No: 49, April 1999, p.23.

⁸⁵ Barbara L. Marshall, *Engendering Modernity: Feminism, Social Theory and Social Change*, (Oxford: Polity Press, 1994), p.111.

subjectivity as ‘an emergent property of a historicized experience’⁸⁶. In her book *Alice Doesn't*, de Lauretis formulates ‘woman’ as a ‘fictional construct’ produced by hegemonic discourses and ‘women’ as ‘real historical beings’⁸⁷ and urges feminists not only to describe this relation in which women’s subjectivity is grounded but also to change it.

As a result of the current debates within feminist circles, feminism has become a vaguer term than ever in that it can refer to a variety of things, an approach or a political position. One can be a postmodernist feminist, a socialist feminist, an antiporn feminist, a liberal feminist, an ecofeminist, etc. Despite these seemingly contradictory motivations within feminism, Stabile suggests that certain commonalities can be observed at the intersection of anti-essentialism and postmodernism and explains that ‘although anti-essentialists claim a connection to feminist politics, the category “politics” (like the term “woman”) is often emptied, as for postmodernists the “social” is collapsed into the “discursive”, and social relations into linguistic patterns’⁸⁸. Thus, according to Stabile, the argument for differences emphasizes individualized power relations but excludes their systemic interconnection, and furthermore the systemic power of patriarchy and capitalism disappears from the debate. The outcome of this micropolitical focus, as Stabile states, is that ‘a politics of identity based on “life style”, consumption; and

⁸⁶ In her article ‘Upping the anti(sic) in feminist theory’ de Lauretis proposes a new move for the essentialist debate and argues that feminism’s ‘essential difference’ is to be found in its historical specificity and in the sites, bodies, discourses in and through which women live differently both from men and from each other. She further suggests that analysis of feminism’s historical specificity should begin with the ‘female-embodied social subject’. *The Cultural Studies Reader*, (ed.) Simon During, (London: Routledge, 1993) p.84.

⁸⁷ Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p.5.

⁸⁸ Stabile, 1995, p.5.

individualism has replaced a politics of common interest and collective social struggle' (ibid.). In-depth analysis of the British women's magazines in chapter three reflects this politics of feminist identity in which feminism is represented as a style and something new to wear. Popularisation of feminism in this way will be discussed later in terms of how this situation might be interpreted and what it means for future feminist politics and strategies.

To sum up, with the dissemination of feminist ideas through the media, education, politics and other sources, the term feminism has been redefined, modified and become 'common sense'. With reference to this aspect of change in feminist thought in the 1980s and 1990s, Rebecca West suggests that feminism 'can refer to an era simply where new generations have been exposed to feminist thinking so that feminism becomes part of the collective consciousness'⁸⁹. Controversial understandings of the term feminism lead some feminists to question whether feminism is dead or alive, but whatever direction the argument goes, certainly it has become a significant public as well as an academic debate over the years. In her article, 'Feminism: Dead or Alive'⁹⁰, Andrea Stuart states that feminism, 'with a capital 'F'', is unresponsive or simply irrelevant to women's needs and lifestyles'. She argues that it cannot be over and referring to the 1980s she says 'women still did not receive equal pay for equal work; women were still struggling for control of their reproductive rights; and women still, by virtue of their sex, in almost all societies and

⁸⁹ Rebecca West, 'Feminist Activism: continuity and change' in *Women Power and Resistance: An Introduction to Women's Studies*, (eds.) Tess Cosslett, Alison Easton and Penny Summerfield, (Buckingham: Open University, 1996), p.248.

⁹⁰ Stuart, 1990, p.28.

in almost all cultures, fell to the bottom of social arrangements' (ibid.). Indeed these issues still remain as problems women face today, however, many feminists today seem neither to acknowledge them as 'women's problems', nor suggest collective activism against male dominance, nor attempt to link feminist theory and practice.

The discussions outlined in this chapter shows that although feminism as an object of study is going forward, feminist politics to produce strategies against women's oppression have remained static. Some feminist debates and particularly the work of black and lesbian feminists revolve around this problem. They point to the need to focus on the political and theoretical implications of the fact of women's lived experiences in order to produce strategies against women's oppression by the ideologies of patriarchy and capitalism. Although in a different form from WLM, there is still a number of feminist activities happening in different parts of the country in the form of self-help groups and the provision of services (women's refuges, rape crisis centres etc.), publications and campaigns. One of the significant campaigns launched in the 1990s was 'The Zero Tolerance' public awareness campaign which was launched in Edinburgh by the District Council's Women's Committee in 1992 in an attempt to tackle the issue of violence against women. The Committee aimed to find ways to present a feminist analysis of the causes of violence against women, for the first time with local government backing, in the public domain.⁹¹ 'Using feminist research to campaign for change seems obvious enough but how often does it happen?' (ibid.) asks the Director of the Campaign. This campaign points to the

⁹¹ 'The Zero Tolerance' campaign is discussed in detail by Susan Hart, 'Zero Tolerance of Violence Against Women' in *Desperately Seeking Sisterhood*, (eds.) Magdalene Ang-Lygate, Chris Corrin and Millsom S. Henry, (London: Taylor & Francis, 1997), pp. 95-105.

possibilities and significance of putting feminist research and theory into practice. It also highlights the necessity for feminist academics and feminist activists to work in collaboration in order to produce new feminist policies for the needs of women in the new millennium.

b) CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST THOUGHT IN TURKEY

As has already been pointed out the signifier feminism is a pluralistic and complex concept. Responses to or reactions against the label feminism represent specific cultural formations and thus vary depending on values attributed to the label in a given culture. Diverse cultural contexts, like the West and non-West, provide both a major source of difference and possible models for the understanding of feminism. According to Nükhet Sirman, the Western experience of feminism has, through its theory and well-documented history, provided an important reference point as well as a very strong popular image of what feminism is about and who feminists are for non-Western feminist activists.¹ Sirman's view suggests that Western and non-Western experiences can be related but at the same time they are historically specific phenomena. As discussed in the Introduction, the flow of ideas is dominated by Western feminists and this has led some feminists from non-Western countries to criticize Western-centred feminist discourses. The formation of feminist thought in Turkey has not only been influenced by Western currents of thought, but also by international organizations and transnational networks. This interaction stimulated Turkish feminists initially by providing them with ways of forming the feminist political struggle in Turkey and later by producing policies relevant to local women's demands. Turkish feminists' search for an 'authentic' discourse will be discussed further in the last part of this section.

¹ Nükhet Sirman, 'Feminism in Turkey: A Short History' in *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Fall 1989, 3(1), pp. 1-34, (p.1-2).

Since the mid-1980s, when a new feminist movement emerged in Turkey², it has become increasingly common to speak about the concept of feminism in public. However, it would be misleading to take the early 1980s as a starting point as its roots trace back to the late 19th century. Turkish feminist researchers tend to identify three crucial historical moments in which debates over the position of women occupied a central place in the political and ideological agenda of the late Ottoman period and contemporary Turkey.³ The first one was during the period of Ottoman reforms instituted in the second half of the 19th century. The early reformers, who inscribed themselves in a modernist Islamic perspective, suggested some changes in women's conditions. Under Islamic law, a woman was worth half a man in matters concerning testimony before courts and inheritance. Under family law, which permitted men four wives, a woman was worth even less. As Nermin Abadan-Unat and Oya Tokgöz comment, 'although this approach to relations between women and men has been abolished legally, social traditions still reflect its legacy'⁴. The first-stage feminist movement questioned the status of women in Ottoman society by contesting the traditional role ascribed to women as wives and mothers and claimed the right to an education, to work and to participate in public life. Sirin Tekeli, one of the most prominent feminist scholars/activists in Turkey, points out that there are many

² It is important to differentiate between the terms *feminist movement* and *feminist movements* in relation to Turkey. I use the first term to refer to feminist activism in the 1980s when it was a single movement. It is not necessary to talk about movements until the end of the 1980s when three new feminist activisms, namely Kemalist, Islamist and Kurdish emerged onto the political arena.

³ Sirman, 1989; Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Emancipated but Unliberated? Reflections on the Turkish Case', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 Summer 1987, pp. 317-38; Sirin Tekeli, 'Emergence of the New Feminist Movements in Turkey' *The New Women's Movements*, (ed.) D. Dahlerup, (London: Sage, 1986), pp. 179-99.

⁴ Nermin Abadan-Unat and Oya Tokgöz, 'Turkish Women as Agents of Social Change in a Pluralist Democracy', in *Women and Politics Worldwide*, (eds.) Barbara J. Nelson & Najma Chowdhury, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 706-720, (p.708).

parallels between this period's grassroots movement and the grassroots movement in the 1980s.⁵

The second period of debates over the status of women and the meaning of womanhood took place in the early years of the establishment of the Turkish Republic. It was in this period that the westernisation process started and woman's rights and the role of women in society became an important part of public discussion. Women's status progressed a great deal compared to the Ottoman era through the reforms introduced by the new Republic. These reforms and their consequences for current feminist thought will be discussed in the following sections.

The third time that feminism and the 'woman question' occupied an important space in the public sphere was after the military coup of 1980. This new feminist struggle, as will be examined later, has succeeded in articulating the position of women in society as a central political issue and has become part of the political discourse. In this process feminism has engaged in debates with two other ideologies that occupied the political arena as oppositions to the state: namely left-wing ideologies and Islamic discourses. Having shared the same political space, these ideologies have inevitably shaped feminist issues and demands in Turkey.

The evolution of feminist movements and current debates around the 'woman question' are examined in two main parts which parallel the last two historical

⁵Sirin Tekeli, 'Introduction: Women in Turkey in the 1980s' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, (London: Zed Books, 1995), pp. 1-21, (p.11).

moments outlined above.⁶ The first part looks at the Republican era whose ideology led to the formation of women's demands which provided the conditions of contemporary feminist debates in Turkey. The second part of this section focuses on the socio-political and cultural context of the 1980s within which women articulated their political demands in order to examine parameters that constitute feminism in the late 1990s. These two historical moments specific to Turkish experience point to the fact that feminist movements did not take the same form in Turkey as they did in the West in general and in Britain in particular; circumstances, times, histories, expectations are all too diverse for that to happen. As has emerged from the studies on international feminism over the last thirty years, feminism is developing differently in different cultures.⁷ In this section, I examine the contemporary status of feminism in Turkey by locating the development of feminist thought in a historical context, and exploring the political space within which feminist movements have evolved. Differences and similarities between Turkey and Britain are also examined where they are relevant.

The Project of Modernity and Emergence of 'State Feminism'

The intention of the founders of the new Republic was to create a Turkish as opposed to an Ottoman identity, and it was fostered by introducing an alternative to the

⁶ I will be focusing on the last two periods of these historical moments as social, cultural, and political specificities of these periods have led to the formulation of demands concerning the 'woman question' and have shaped the contemporary feminist thought in Turkey.

⁷ For example, Peggy Watson examines the rise of masculinity in Eastern Europe and compares it with the Western experience in her article '(Anti)feminism after Communism'. She argues that the rise of masculinism can hardly be called an anti-feminist response, because feminism was never itself claimed as a political identity by Eastern European women. Peggy Watson, '(Anti)feminism after Communism' in *Who's Afraid of Feminism*, (eds.) Ann Oakley and Juliet Mitchell (London: Penguin, 1997), pp. 144-61.

Ottoman family life style in which women were oppressed under Islamic rules. The reforms, named as Kemalist reforms⁸, introduced by the new ruling elite were directed at undermining the bases of the Islamic way of life. The *Shariat*, was replaced by the Swiss Civil Code in 1926. Turkey's secularist project involved the expunging of all religious signs and practices from the public sphere in order to install the modern way of life: the banning of religious shrines (*türbe*) and the dervish orders (*tarikât*) (1925); the outlawing of traditional Ottoman headgear, the red felt cap, the *fez*, and its replacement with the European hat (1925); the adoption of the Western calendar (1926); the replacement of Arabic script with Latin script (1928) - all testify to the desire to cut links with the Islamic world in a turn toward Western civilization.⁹

Among many reforms to regulate daily life, the Kemalist reforms also included women's bodily, social, and political visibility in the public sphere. The removal of the veil, the establishment of compulsory co-education for girls and boys, the guarantee of civil rights for women including eligibility to vote and to hold office, and the abolition of Islamic family law guaranteed the public visibility and citizenship of women.¹⁰ A new 'modern' image of woman was created by the leaders of the Republic: the 'new woman' was unveiled and looked European. This is only one example of the constant use of women's bodies as vehicles for the symbolic representation of political means. The attitudes of the new Republic towards creating an egalitarian society and appearing to place women in the centre of it through

⁸ The reformist movements is known as Kemalism, it takes its name from the nationalist leader, Mustafa Kemal, later Atatürk who founded the Turkish Republic in 1923.

⁹ Nilüfer Göle, 'The Gendered Nature of the Public Sphere', *Public Culture*, 10 (1), 1997, pp. 61-81, (p. 65).

¹⁰ Nilüfer Göle, 1997, p.65.

granting rights to women was called ‘state feminism’ by many observers. In other words, the struggle for women’s emancipation during this phase is regarded by many researchers as the state-regulated and institutional ‘emancipation’ of women.

Improvements in women’s status were recognized as one of the key issues in building a new state. The adaptation of the Swiss Civil Code and the 1934 passage of universal suffrage in particular were responsible for dramatic improvements in women’s lives; they also played significant roles in the Westernisation process.¹¹ This meant a formal expansion of women’s democratic rights, which helped enhance women’s status in public life. Along with men, a small group of women whose class, religion and tradition allowed them, benefited from the new civil and social rights. The state encouraged women to seek employment outside the home, especially as teachers, thus a new mission was given to women, that of educating the nation. As Sirman suggests, ‘if the reformist Ottoman debates in the second half of the nineteenth century constituted women primarily as wives and mothers in need of education, the Republican reforms constituted them as patriotic citizens’.¹² These women, who had privilege in educational institutions, in work and social life, were perceived as symbols of democracy in the young Republic. These privileged women, of course, had middle-class, upper middle-class backgrounds and were close relatives of the bureaucrats.

¹¹ Yesim Arat, ‘Women’s Movements of the 1980s in Turkey: Radical Outcome of Liberal Kemalism?’, in *Reconstructing Gender in The Middle East: Tradition, Identity and Power*, (eds.) S. Balaghi and F. Göçek, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. 100-13, (p.101).

¹² Sirman, 1989, p.9.

The 'new woman' of the Kemalist era became a symbol which Mustafa Kemal himself did much to promote. As Kandiyoti writes,

‘he did so personally through the inclusion of Latife Hanim, his wife, in his public tours, through his relations with his adoptive daughters... and through his broader endorsement of women’s visibility, attested to by photographs of the period ranging from ballroom dancing to official ceremonies’¹³.

Mustafa Kemal viewed women’s equality to men as part of Turkey’s commitment to Westernisation, secularisation, and democracy. The public spaces were reorganized around these values, for instance, tea salons, dinners, balls, and streets would be the public spaces for the socializing of both men and women and would characterize the European style of male-female encounter. The emergence of a modern secular way of life indicated a radical shift from the social organization and gender roles framed by Islamic religion. Novels of the Republic would base their stories and characters on this new ‘civilized’ way of life. The novels of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoglu are among the best example, representing a secularised public life by accommodating women’s public participation with the values of modesty.

The gendered nature of the public sphere created by Kemalist modernist projects shows considerable differences from that of Western European history. As Nilüfer Göle states,

Whereas in Western European history the public sphere emerged as a liberal-bourgeois sphere, with women (and the working class) initially excluded... in the Turkish mode of modernization women’s visibility and citizenship rights *endorsed* the existence of the public sphere...In Muslim contexts of modernity, the public sphere emerges as an outcome not of a liberal bourgeois ideology but of authoritarian state modernism.¹⁴

¹³ Deniz Kandiyoti, ‘End of Empire: Islam, Nationalism and Women in Turkey’, in *Women, Islam and the State*, (ed.) Deniz Kandiyoti, (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 22-47, (p.41).

¹⁴ Göle, 1997, p.63-4.

According to Göle, both the gendered and the authoritarian nature of the public sphere in modernist projects define the particularity of Turkish appropriations of modernity. Questions of identity, including gender identity, in the context of contemporary Turkey are still negotiated within these parameters of the public sphere between modernist-Westernist elites and those who have challenged them from the Islamist perspective. The control of women's public visibilities and intimacies is central to Islamist politics' desire to differentiate itself from modernist liberal projects.¹⁵

To create a democratic society and a secular state through the reforms, it was explicitly emphasized that men and women were equal; there was no difference between them as they both worked to build up a nation. But any achievement that women obtained through education and work were accepted as an addition to women's already perceived natural roles as mothers and wives. While women kept their traditional domestic roles in the private sphere, the dominant female image of the period in the context of public life was that of the asexual and hard-working woman who took an active role in the struggle to liberate the recently founded Republic.

¹⁵ The concept of Islam is complex and changing in relation to historically specific and political conditions. My use of Islam is specific to a particular geography and time; that is, the context of Turkey in this century. Islam has, even in the context of Turkey, many layers and sects. However, these issues are beyond the scope of this study. The distinctive feature of Islam religion in Turkey is that it has been modernized through the reforms of the late Ottoman period and more significantly through the reforms of the Turkish Republic. For further discussion, see Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (second edition), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968). Despite the process of modernization of Islam, Islamic practices of everyday life have always been placed against the secularist rules of the Turkish state. My use of Islamist politics refers to the discourse Islamist people have developed in their struggle in the political arena to cope with the secularist discourse of the Turkish state. The Islamist discourse has been utilised and represented by a political party in each period of the recent Turkish political history. As will be discussed later, the Islamist discourse found its voice through the Refah party in the political context of the 1980s and 1990s. The discussion of Islamic politics in this study should be understood in this context.

Formal emancipation of women can be seen as an inherent part of the modernization of the Kemalist project, which used women, as Kandiyoti claims, as ‘symbolic pawns’.¹⁶ While in the 1937 general election 18 women deputies were elected, making up 4.5% of the National Assembly, which was an all time high, women’s autonomous political initiatives were actively discouraged.¹⁷ For instance, in keeping with the spirit of reforms, a *Women’s Party* was founded in 1923 but remained unauthorized by the state. The state advised the women initiatives to found an association, and as a result the *Women’s Party* changed its name and called itself the *Turkish Women’s Federation*. Its manifesto was formulated in somewhat milder terms; its prime interest was to obtain equal rights in politics. As elsewhere in the West, the first feminist wave struggled for women’s access to the public sphere, and for equal rights.

In 1935, when the government announced that the period of reforms was completed, an International Feminist Congress was held in Istanbul. One of the prominent themes of the Congress was peace. Binnaz Toprak points out that Turkish feminists’ stand on disarmament at a time when defence spending was increasing its share of the national budget was inopportune as it resulted in the self-elimination of the Federation under directives from Ankara.¹⁸ Latife Bekir, the leader of the Federation, offered the public rationale for the closure of the Federation and claimed that Turkish women had

¹⁶ Deniz Kandiyoti, ‘Women and the Turkish State: Political Actors or Symbolic Pawns?’, in *Women-Nation-State*, (eds. F. Anthias and N. Yuval-Davis, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 126-150, (p.145).

¹⁷ Kandiyoti, 1991, p. 41.

¹⁸ Binnaz Toprak, ‘1935 Istanbul Uluslararası “Feminizm Kongresi” ve “Baris”’, *Düşün*, (March 1986), pp. 24-9.

achieved complete equality with full constitutional guarantees, and that the goals of the Federation having thus been totally fulfilled, there was no further justification for its continued existence.¹⁹ Consequently, as Kandiyoti comments, ‘the Republican regime opened up an arena for state-sponsored “feminism”, but at one and the same time circumscribed and defined its parameters’ (ibid.).

The policies of this time had the effect of stunting the development of grassroots feminism until the 1980s as many professional and academic women believed that there was no need for a women’s movement since women had gained equal rights in the public sphere through Kemalist reforms. During this time a few associations were formed such as the Turkish Mothers’ Association, the Women’s Rights Association, the University Women’s Association, the Association of Women Lawyers, all of which espoused the general aim of protecting the rights that women had gained during the early Republican period. For these women, who were the beneficiaries of Kemalist reforms, Islam constituted the main threat to women’s freedom. They tended to identify and associate themselves with Kemalist ideology. Secularism was of primary importance; the potential or actual threat of the Islamic groups was considered to be more important than women’s liberation. Thus most of the women’s groups during this period did not associate themselves with feminist ideology: some of them positioned themselves within or against what they perceived feminism to be and this positioning was compatible with political visibility and activism.

¹⁹ Kandiyoti, 1991, p. 42.

The 1980s: A Search for A New Female Identity

The new feminist movement, which emerged in the early 1980s, was regarded by some scholars as an extension of the Westernisation process established by Kemalist reforms. However, feminist practices over the last decade and analyses of feminist thought illustrate that the new feminist movement goes beyond that by questioning the sufficiency of the Kemalist reforms for women's liberation. The identity of women, which had been defined by the nationalist Kemalist ideals, began to be challenged and questioned from a feminist perspective. Unlike the Kemalist tradition, the new feminist movement supported radical changes as well as reforms to restructure society and its patriarchal institutions. Thus a new and by definition, anti-state, ideology gradually began to gain ground.

To understand the contemporary status of feminism in Turkey, the so-called 'second feminist wave', it is first necessary to examine the political situation in the 1980s. Turkey experienced a third military coup in 1980²⁰ and this unstable political situation gave women a chance to politicise the then strictly unpolitical public arena to fight against women's oppression. Paradoxically while the army was holding power for three years, banning all political activities and outlawing political parties, forcefully silencing all political voices, at the same time, a new feminist movement emerged and became influential at a national level.

²⁰ Coup d'etats occurred in 1960, 1971 and 1980.

After the military coup, Turkish citizens entered the so-called 'Özal era'. Following the three years of military regime, Özal's conservative party ANAP won the 1983 national election. The implementation of this government's liberal policies opened up a space for people to question the very identity of the Turkish citizen. As Sirman suggests, the post-1980s can be looked at as 'a period marked by new attempts to define and regulate the social order, through efforts to redefine modes of legitimate participation within the political domain'²¹. New forms of political participation from all sections of society began to search for new understandings of individuality and identity. The privatisation of television and radio in the 1980s helped to bring Turkey lively public debate. Especially since 1983, as Kandiyoti notes, 'with the transition to democracy after the 1980 military coup, roundtables, panels, and talk shows have been a popular medium for intellectuals, political actors, and citizens debating the issues of identity, secularism, ethnicity, and democracy'²². These debates have also included women's search for a 'new' female identity. Thus like Western countries, identity politics in the 1980s and 1990s -whether in the form of religious, ethnic, cultural or local movements- show signs of occupying an important position in the political agenda of Turkey.

In the early 1980s, a group of women who were predominantly middle class, educated and living in the big cities began to question problems in society that stemmed from being a woman. Although the women's rights gained throughout the twenty century seemed to be secured by the state ideology, a new, anti-state feminist ideology was

²¹ Sirman, 1989, p.15.

²² Göle, 1997, p.62.

gradually gaining ground through which these women began to raise their voices against male oppression and to question their gender status and traditional feminine identity. One of the reasons why the 'woman question' was not taken as an important point of focus before the 1980s, Tekeli suggests, can be linked to 'the dominant position of left-wing ideologies in anti-state circles'²³.

Most of the women who were involved in the new feminist movement had a leftist political background and were Marxist oriented. Tekeli comments on the early days of the movement:

This was the first time they (women) were able to think from a women's perspective and shake off Marxist concepts, not only on the issue of who is being oppressed by what, but also on forms of (democratic) organization. We discovered just how thoroughly Turkish society was permeated by patriarchal and sexist concepts and the 'fact' that daily private life is the real arena of patriarchy.²⁴

Those women who identified themselves as feminists contributed to the development of the new feminist movement when the concept of feminism was associated with some negative words, such as misogyny and lesbianism. Consciousness-raising groups and small discussion groups started to increase and some of them emphasized the need to disseminate feminist ideas through publications. This idea became a page in the *Yazko* weekly *Somut* (Concrete) in 1983. This page did not last long, but the same year a group of women formed a women's organization called *Kadın Çevresi* (Women's Circle), which had publishing and translating facilities, and soon after

²³ Sirin Tekeli, 'Emergence of the New Feminist Movements in Turkey', in *The New Women's Movements*, ed. by D. Dahlerup, (Beverly Hills: Sage 1986), pp. 179-199 (p.194-5).

²⁴ Cited in Marianne Grünell and Anneke Voeten, 'State of the Art Feminism in Plural: Women's Studies in Turkey', in *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol. 4, 1997: 219-233 (p.225).

started to translate many feminist classics into Turkish. It also acted as an information service to assist women on health and legal questions, violence and divorce.

These pioneering publications show Turkish feminists' desire to follow the feminist debates that had originated in the West. This interaction at the level of feminist literature led to the publication of two feminist journals in the second half of the 1980s. It is around these journals that the dynamics of feminist debates emerged during this period. A journal called *Feminist* was published in 1987, its editorial goals were stated as following: 'We have been reflecting on the nature of our exploitation for some time, but this journal gave us the courage to speak out about what affects us personally. As you know, we, the feminists, think the personal is political'²⁵. Thus the prominent slogan of the second-wave Western feminist movements, 'the personal is political' came to be recognized as an important aspect of the feminist movement in Turkey too. Soon after another feminist journal *Sosyalist Feminist Kaktüs* (Socialist Feminist Cactus) began publication. As it is evident from its title, these women identified themselves as socialist as well as feminist activists who were interested in charting their ideological distinctiveness. Although they saw socialism and feminism as two complementary but distinct forms of struggle, at the same time they emphasized the connections between feminist practice and socialist theory. With the publication of these journals and the re-emergence of the Kemalist/state feminist discourse towards the late 1980s, recognition of different feminisms had become more visible. The three main strands of the women's liberation movements in the

²⁵ Cited in Yesim Arat, 'Women's Movements of the 1980s in Turkey: Radical Outcome of Liberal Kemalism?', 1994, p.110.

West; radical, socialist, and liberal²⁶, also became the three dominant discourses for the feminist struggle in the context of 1980s' Turkey. As will be discussed later, in addition, the Islamic discourse has shared the same political ground with these discourses on the 'woman question' since the late 1980s.

These feminist discourses differ on a number of substantial issues in terms of problematizing patriarchy and the present-day subordination of women. One of the significant issues radical feminists differ on from Islamist, Kemalist and traditional Left ideologies, is the questioning of female sex and sexuality in relation to male-female power relations. Kemalist reforms granted women public roles, particularly as educators, but above all women were conceived as mothers and wives which constituted women's defined essential nature. To continue to be a wife and a mother was seen as a duty to her nation.²⁷ Maleness and femaleness were seen as 'private' issues under the authority of man as the head of the family. Despite the new Turkish woman's active participation in the struggle to liberate and improve her nation, the dominant female image of the period, as has been pointed out earlier, was asexual. This image of woman led some researchers to conclude that nationalist and Islamic discourses concur in establishing a definition of woman compatible with the true identity of the collectivity, one in which the sexuality of women is kept under strict

²⁶ Liberal feminists are referred to in Turkey as the egalitarian Kemalist feminists who emphasize equal rights to men, however, the types of issues they have raised as 'egalitarian' feminists have evolved over the mid-1980s and the 1990s. I will discuss this phase of the feminist movements later, which is historically and culturally specific to Turkish context. Despite the universal resonances with basic tenets of human rights, egalitarian feminism in the context of the 1980s' feminism in Turkey, as Arat points out, was linked with Kemalist ideology, specifically Kemalist nationalism, populism, and secularism. Yesim Arat, 'A Feminist Mirror in Turkey: Portraits of Two Activists in the 1980s', *Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Fall 1996, vol. 5, pp. 113-32.

²⁷ Sirman, 1989, p.12.

control.²⁸ The restoration of the Islamic community conceptualises an essential notion of womanhood. As Sirman notes, this requires a total submission to women's nature as the only possible form of true existence. Motherhood constitutes a crucial element of this essential nature and therefore women's reproductive nature becomes the sole purpose of sex.²⁹

Some feminist researchers have argued that traditional Left ideologies exercised control and supervision over women as much as the Kemalist ideology, and to some extent the Islamic ideology. For example, Fatmagül Berktaş writes that for the Left, women had a greater tendency to 'go bourgeois' and this idea justified exercising daily jurisdiction over their dress and behaviour.³⁰ In order to deal with women's appearance in public and women's sexuality, the male militants of the left came up with the 'sister' (*bacı*) stereotype. Berktaş states that

this rustic and folksy-sounding word *bacı*, drawn from provincial speech, denoted an unsexed, depersonalised kind of "woman comrade". Through the slogan "The people are my only love, and all women are my sisters", male militants tried to protect themselves against women's potential for introducing discord (*fitna* in Islam) into revolutionary unity and solidarity. This entire notion was remarkably similar to Islamic ideology's exclusion and negation of personal erotic love for the sake of maintaining the inner cohesion of the community of believers, but nobody seems to have been struck by the parallels, then as now.³¹

Radical feminists questioned this essentialized notion of womanhood which lay at the core of those ideologies discussed above, and challenged and deconstructed the

²⁸ See for example, Kandiyoti, 1989, and Nilüfer Göle, *Modern Mahrem: Medeniyet ve Örtünme*, (Istanbul: Metis, 1993).

²⁹ Sirman, 1989, p.26.

³⁰ Fatmagül Berktaş, 'Has Anything Changed in the Outlook of the Turkish Left on Women?' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, (London: Zed Books, 1995), pp. 250-62.

³¹ Berktaş, 1995, p.252.

stereotypical female identity. Their anti-essentialist arguments gradually influenced the representation of women in culture. The post 1980s marked the representation and discussion of women's individuality and sexuality in popular culture for the first time, in particular in some novels, women's magazines, and films. For example, the infamous director Atif Yilmaz began to centre urban, modern, liberal female characters in his films. *Kadınca*, which was one of the early examples of women's magazines in this period, attempted to define womanhood outside their traditional role as a wife and a mother. *Kadınca* established a discourse which encouraged women to discover themselves, especially their feelings, capabilities and sexuality.

The mainstream press also contributed to the dissemination of feminist goals, values and arguments. In the second half of the 1980s, the press attempted to give a place to female identities that remained outside the dominant male discourse.³² Saktanber suggests two developments in the political process which are responsible for this change:

One is the place accorded from time to time to views by activists of the feminist movement that has been gaining ground since the 1980s, the other is the increasing preoccupation with women of the left, the social democrats, and to a certain extent, of the liberal right -as well as a certain section of the press itself- in reaction to the Islamic movements that developed in the 1980s.³³

³² This positive development, however, caused conflicts between men and women and gender relations started to be discussed in the media. The feminist movements resulted in uncommon and odd macho literature and images. Some men who did not identify themselves as macho before, started to adopt a macho identity and defined it in relation to feminism. Their reactions to feminists were rather strong and aggressive. Depiction of a new understanding of a macho character was especially underlined in cartoons. Ironical representation of a macho character is still the case in the Turkish press. For example, there is a regular cartoon in a daily, *Radical*, which always portrays an old fashioned, stereotypical macho man and a self-confident, self-conscious, 'liberated' woman. It emphasizes to what extent women have changed and to what extent men have remained the same.

³³ Aye Saktanber, 'Women in the Media in Turkey: the Free, Available Women or the Good Wife and Selfless Mother' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, (London: Zed, 1995), pp. 153-69, (p.154).

Since the 1980s, women have become the main target of discussions of Islamic revivalism, as Islamic groups argued for women in the veil to be accepted in schools and government offices. The press, which supported secularism, took interest in women's issues and began to create venues where the position of women in Turkish society could be discussed. For example, *Hürriyet*, a liberal-right daily with the highest circulation figures in Turkey, and *Cumhuriyet*, a Leftist daily considered to be the most serious newspaper in the country took an open stance against Islamist movements. *Cumhuriyet* opened up a discussion page in October 1989, inviting readers to contribute on the 'woman question', an invitation that proved quite successful, with at least one letter appearing on women's issues daily. In 1989, another liberal-right daily, *Sabah*, with the second highest circulation figures, started to publish a magazine supplement called *Melodi*, subtitled 'A Quality Women's Newspaper'. *Melodi* still remains as a supplement on women's issues. Saktanber also adds that one of the factors that led to so much discussion on women during this period was the 25% quota accorded to them by the Social Democratic Populist Party of Turkey.³⁴

Consequently, the mainstream press have contributed to disseminating feminist politics to a wider audience, yet they have often added their own definitions of feminism and sometimes treated feminism as a trivial subject. As in the Western media, this is done through distorting feminist ideas and creating stereotypical images of feminists out of them. For example, Ayse Düzkan comments that 'feminist images

³⁴ Saktanber, 1995, p.167.

created in caricatures were sexually attractive, half naked and wearing feminine earrings. Actually, I have never seen such women among the feminist activists'³⁵.

Institutionalisation of the Feminist Movement

Feminists were increasingly reaching more women through their actions and publications but in order to disseminate their work collectively they started setting up associations in big cities like Istanbul and Ankara. In 1986, the first collective action of these associations took place in the form of a petition campaign demanding the implementation of an international convention, the CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), which the Turkish government had officially signed in 1985. Eight years later another widespread campaign was undertaken, where over one hundred thousand signatures were handed to the National Assembly again demanding the implementation of the conditions set by the CEDAW. No process was seen to be in action towards the changing of the Turkish Civil Code to fulfil the CEDAW conditions until 1998. The continuing effort of feminists to have a dialogue with the state institutions and the role of the media in reporting the debates over such issues have finally helped change some of the Articles in the Turkish Civil Code to fulfil some of the conditions. For example, married women are no longer required to assume their husband's surname; they were previously required to submit their husband's permission to receive a passport, which then restricted their freedom of mobility. Adultery laws were used to discriminate against women, making it easier for a man to initiate divorce proceedings based on

³⁵ '80'li Yillarda Türkiye'de Feminizm: Ayşe Düzkın ve Meltem Ahiska ile söyleşi', *Defter Dergisi*, Fall 1994, vol. 7, No: 21, pp. 145-67, (p.163).

his wife's alleged adultery than vice versa. Adultery laws were totally abolished temporarily in 1998, and the government is still discussing how to replace the previous adultery laws. One of the most important laws, which perpetuates gender inequality within the family, is still waiting to be abolished. That is, the husband is by law still automatically the head of the marriage union, thus granting him final say over the choice of domicile as well as final say concerning children. Public discussions illustrate that Turkish men and particularly male politicians seem to be very sensitive toward this subject, as if giving up being head of the family somehow would harm their masculinity.

As in Britain, the issue of domestic violence has assumed a high priority in feminist politics in Turkey. In 1987, women's groups joined forces to launch a campaign called 'Solidarity Against Battering' against domestic violence. This campaign has served as a focus point among different individuals and women's groups. The women who organized the campaign claimed that many women suffered from systematic physical abuse from their male relatives in the home. Although the campaign has been successful in capturing the public's attention, no legal changes regarding the issue have been implemented so far. The battering of women was on the agenda of the then new government (which replaced the fundamentalist party Refah) in September 1997 whose women ministers had prepared and presented to the parliament new regulations to protect women from domestic violence. But members of the fundamentalist party opposed these regulations and stopped the parliament from passing laws. Their 'backward' attitudes, as defined by the media, and statements generated debates in

public and political circles. Manuals of beating women according to Islamic rules were discussed and published in the press in detail for days. Their arguments not only represent the Islamic approach to gender roles in society but also illustrate an ongoing conflict between the secularist government and the Islamic ideology.³⁶

In order to offer a solution to women who had faced domestic violence, following the Western model, feminists demanded that local authorities and political parties open shelters for battered women. In response, two municipalities, Bakırköy and Sisli in Istanbul, opened women's shelters and then some other municipalities followed them, but they did not last long. This development led some feminists to establish independent shelters, such as *Mor Çati* (Purple Roof) (1990) in Istanbul. In the early days it only offered free legal advice to women, later in 1995 it became the first independent active women's shelter.³⁷ Yet some feminists have acknowledged the idea of women's shelters as an unsuitable solution to Turkish conditions. In her recent article in *Pazartesi*, Ayşe Düzkan points to the failure of adopting this Western feminist project in the Turkish context caused by not taking into consideration specific local traditions and conditions. She argues that although the shelters founded in the mid-1990s helped feminists to make domestic violence an issue on the political agenda, this project appeared to be only a short sighted solution to this problem.

³⁶ The fundamentalist party, Refah, came into power as a coalition government in December 1995 but about a year later it was seen as a threat to the secularist ideology of the Turkish Republic. Thus the Refah party was forced to resign in 1997, a coalition government of conservatives and socialists replaced this government. The new government systematically attempted to undo Refah's Islamic ideology in order to 'save' democracy. I suggest that conflicts between Refah and the government over gender issues can be understood better considering this particular political context.

³⁷ For detailed discussion of the foundation of *Mor Çati* see, Yesim Arat, 'Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation: Democratic Aspirations in Institution Building', *Bogaziçi Journal: Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies*, Vol. 8, no 1-2, 1984, pp. 121-135.

Düzkan identifies two reasons for this: first, the feminist groups' lack of organizations which prevented them from working on collective projects after the mid-1990s; second, unlike Western countries, the non-existence of a welfare state in Turkey makes it very difficult to support this kind of a social project regularly.³⁸

Compared with the strict rules of some Western countries, abortion is legal in Turkey and thus it is not such a major issue here, yet married women still need their husband's consent. For example, although large street demonstrations were not a significant characteristic of the British Women's Liberation movement³⁹, abortion as well as equal pay generated large demonstrations in Britain. The 1967 Abortion Act was widely supported by all three strands of feminism, and when the Corrie Bill revised the liberal abortion law in 1979 and made abortion much more difficult to obtain, 40.000 people turned out to march in London in protest against it.⁴⁰ This issue assumed a high priority in feminist politics in Britain. While such demonstrations also included the defence of freedom of sexuality in Britain, sexuality remained, and still remains, a difficult issue for Turkish feminists to politicise.

On the other hand, men's control and abuse of the woman's body is an important issue on the agendas of both the Turkish feminist groups and their Western sisters. A 'No to Sexual Harassment' campaign was organized in 1989 where women demanded

³⁸ Ayşe Düzkan, 'hareket, nereye?', *Pazartesi*, No: 49, April 1999, p. 22.

³⁹ Susan Bassnett comments that this was perhaps due to the absence of any established British tradition for large-scale public demonstrations, but it was also due to the regionalization of British feminism. Susan Bassnett, *Feminist Experiences: The Women's Movements in Four Countries*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986).

⁴⁰ Bassnett, 1986, p.156.

an end to public abuses of the female body. All these activities found a voice in the public sphere, and through these, the women's movement moved on to protesting legal inequalities. The women's movement came to be recognized as a powerful body by the authorities and the public. Demands and actions of feminists for equal opportunity resulted in some changes in the law in favour of women. For example, Article 438 of the Turkish Penal code, which reduced the sentence in rape cases by two-thirds if the victim was a prostitute, was abolished in 1990. Article 159 of the civil code, which forced women to get their husbands' authorization to work outside the home, was also abolished.

The women's movement's success in politicising the personal has had an impact in society as well as on the state institutions.⁴¹ Having accepted women's issues as part of state politics, the Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women (part of the State Ministry for Women's Affairs and Social Services) was founded by the Conservative Government in 1990. The Directorate stated its aims as follows: to end gender inequalities in the areas of social, economic, cultural life and politics.⁴² The Directorate is concerned with a variety of issues that have been on the agenda of the feminist movement since the late 1980s. For example, it provides financial support to

⁴¹ Projects that speak to women were started to be developed by the official establishment during the Özal period in the mid-1980s. An organization called 'The Foundation for the Elevation of the Turkish Women' was founded which not only acted a Ministry of Women's Affairs but also promoted the Motherland Party. The organization was headed by the Prime Minister's wife who was able to channel considerable funds into its main activities, such as the campaign to legalize the marriages of women who had only a religious imprimatur, and the campaign to bring health visitors and means of birth control to rural women. The project of the foundation was interpreted by many feminists as being in line with the principles of the state feminism introduced by Kemalists.

⁴² This statement is taken from the Country Report which was presented at the United Nations annual meeting in 1997, and later was published by the Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women. The name of the Directorate was changed in 1997 into 'The Directorate General on Women's issues'.

shelters for battered women (though not regularly), and carries out fieldwork research to study domestic violence. It also criticizes certain articles in the Criminal Code that favour men over women through which traditional morality and family order are maintained but women as individuals are not recognized. Thus the Directorate has included issues such as sexual assault and rape on its agenda. Along with feminist protests, it has been critical of the criminal code from within the state and argued that the crime should depend on the act of rape not on the virginity of the victim. Another point of criticism has been the virginity checks, which are mostly experienced in the Eastern part of the country and in students' hostels in big cities. Such issues clearly indicate that women's sexuality is strongly regulated by the state.

The interesting point to observe here is that the women's movement not only stood against the patriarchal institutions of the authoritarian state but also influenced its agencies to establish a women's directorate whose work helps legalize women's issues on a political level and fight against its patriarchal ideology from within. One of the Directorate's responsibilities has been representing Turkey at international conferences and following-up the agreements signed by the government to be implemented in Turkey. The most significant one is the CEDAW. The 1997 report presented to the United Nations was prepared in collaboration with the Directorate, some academics and NGOs. This collective work allows feminist academics and women's NGOs to have access to the channels of the state through which they could contribute to making society more democratic regarding equal opportunities and gender equality. Thus the Directorate appears to play an important role as a mediator

between the other state institutions and women's NGOs. Their continuing interaction with feminist ideology and possible use of their research results in future state policies, draws a more positive picture for such a state institution in the Turkish context.

The actions and institutions of the women's movement that have been outlined so far are regarded as a new form in which the position of women is being articulated within the political terrain of Turkey. Like the British case, perhaps the institutionalisation of the feminist movement reduced feminist activism at one level but increased its influence and activity in a range of political arenas at another level. Through steady diffusion of feminist values in the media in the last thirty years, feminist politics came to be seen as a matter of common sense in Britain. The media rely on the idea that society operates on the basis of a shared common culture: 'that the majority, if not all of its members, are in agreement on a wide range of norms, values and ideas and there is agreement on what are reasonable and acceptable patterns of behaviour'⁴³. In this view, seeing feminist politics as common sense points to the assumptions which provide the limits between what is possible and impossible, what is natural and unnatural, what is legitimate and illegitimate to do or to discuss. However, it seems it is too early to talk about feminist values becoming common sense in Turkey, at least not to the degree of the British case.

At this stage in the history of feminist movements in Turkey, the backlash against feminism is not yet an issue within Turkish feminist circles. Yet certain incidents can

⁴³ Rosamund Billington, Sheelagh Strawbridge, Lenore Greensides and Annette Fitzsimons, *Culture and Society*, (London: Macmillan, 1991), p.161-2.

be observed in the Turkish context which confirm that a reaction may have begun. Given the fact that Turkey is an overwhelmingly Muslim country, the reaction to Tansu Çiller's election as the first woman Prime Minister of the Turkish Republic was initially unusually positive. But undoubtedly her position always ran the risk of a backlash. As Geraldine Brooks notes, signs of resentment of Çiller's sex surfaced at a conference in August 1993 for former Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz when delegates began chanting 'Mesut koltuga, Çiller mutfaga' (Mesut back to power and Tansu back to the kitchen).⁴⁴ Despite the enormous rights women have gained in the public and private spheres since the last century, the kitchen is still considered as the 'real' place of women, both in Turkey and Britain.⁴⁵

The feminist movement has also become institutionalised at the academic level. The first 'Women's Research and Education Centre' was established in 1989 at the University of Istanbul and later at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, both offering an MA degree. Some more women's research centres in different parts of the country have been launched recently but they do not offer any degree programme. With the help of the local authorities the Women's Library and Information Centre was founded in Istanbul in 1990. This library has become a centre for women's cultural activities, projects like oral history, local or international conferences and seminars. Despite the fact that these feminist institutions had

⁴⁴ Geraldine Brooks, *Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women*, (London: Penguin, 1996), p.185.

⁴⁵ In an informal discussion with my supervisor, Joanne Collie, an interesting point came out which provides another point of comparison between Turkey and Britain. Labour women MPs complained in October 1997 that male Tory MPs shouted at them in the Parliament sessions: 'Back to the kitchen'. This shows how the 'kitchen' is a powerful symbolic equivalent to women across great cultural differences.

differing aims, feminists succeeded in raising the issue of women's oppression as a major problem in Turkish society and placing it on the agenda of intellectual and political debates.

However, like early second-wave western feminist discourses, feminist groups in the early stages of the movement in Turkey assumed a shared oppression that united women in their struggle for liberation. This assumption had been based on a very specific identity that of a middle-class, highly educated, urban, secularist and often socialist origin. With the emergence of other feminist discourses such as Islamist and Kurdish, the notion of women's oppression as a unitary phenomenon has been challenged. The question of differences between women can be associated with the emergence of identity politics among different sections of society in relation to ethnicity and religion as well as within feminist thought. Diversification of feminist discourses and the question of identity are discussed in detail in the following sections.

Generational Conflict:

Egalitarian (Kemalist) Feminists vs. 'New' Feminists

The issues discussed thus far in the development of Turkish feminist thought have brought different groups together to act collectively, but there are diversified discourses within the movement partly because the underlying motives of their arguments differ. The main division appears between a ^{older} ~~younger~~ generation, who initiated the new women's movement in the early 1980s and called themselves feminists, and a ^{a younger} ~~an older~~ generation, who prefer to call themselves Kemalist feminists

(or egalitarian feminists) and became involved in the movement in the late 1980s. The demands of feminists and the Kemalist tradition have formed the women's movement in contemporary Turkey. As was discussed in the previous section, part of the contemporary feminist debates in Britain revolves around the disparities between an older and younger generation of feminists. The concept of generation conflict also exists within feminist circles in Turkey but in a different sense than Britain as the debates are the outcomes of the culturally specific historical and political context of Turkey.

Reforms introduced in the early years of the Republic had attempted to form a modern Turkey but some Turkish scholars have argued that while the Kemalists articulated the vision of a Westernised Turkey, their secularist politics were neither liberal nor democratic.⁴⁶ In the political context of the 1980s when Özal's government introduced its liberal policies, and Kemalism was no longer a taboo subject to criticize, a group of people who identified themselves as the second wave Republicans emerged in the political and academic arenas. This has also included feminist criticism of the Kemalist reforms on women.⁴⁷ At this point Yesim Arat argues that 'the women's movement of the 1980s was a conscious challenge to Kemalist reforms of women's status'⁴⁸. New generation feminists challenged the inadequacy of Kemalist reforms as they argued they had brought women neither equality nor liberation. After all, women were not equal to men in the eyes of the law,

⁴⁶ For example, Mete Tuncay discusses it in his book *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kuruluşu, 1923-1931*, (Ankara: Yurt Yayinlari, 1981).

⁴⁷ See, for example Sirin Tekeli's introduction to *Women in Modern Turkish Society* (1995), which provides a critical evaluation of the Kemalist reforms.

⁴⁸ Arat, 1994, p.101.

(as discussed previously though some of the laws were abolished in the 1990s) and furthermore, women's suppression in the private sphere was neglected. Questioning the Kemalist project was perceived as a *radical* move because feminists altered the perspective from which women's issues were addressed. They argued that the cause of women's suppression was the patriarchal structure of society, which was perpetuated through the Kemalist reforms. It was believed that women were, to use the title of Kandiyoti's article, 'emancipated but unliberated'⁴⁹. Thus, such a feminist awareness aimed for a more radical restructuring of patriarchal institutions. Inevitably this very aim of the young generation feminists differentiated them from the older generation who identified themselves as Kemalist feminists.

As the evolution of the second wave feminist movement shows, feminist activism has been significant in the context of Turkish political development, however, many feminists share a common view that the radical feminist challenge to Kemalists failed to achieve the dramatic restructuring of society that they proposed. On the contrary, as Arat argues, they helped 'redefine a more liberal, democratic, and secular polity in Turkey, for which the Kemalist reforms allegedly had been undertaken'⁵⁰. The contemporary feminist movement has mobilized individuals and groups to stand up for women's interests and to claim their individual needs. To the extent that liberalism is the ideology of individualism, which respects the power individuals generate independent of the state, Arat claims, 'feminists promoted liberalism in

⁴⁹ In this article Kandiyoti comments on the limitations of the Kemalist programme for women's liberation. Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Emancipated but Unliberated? Reflections on the Turkish Case', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, Summer, pp. 317-38.

⁵⁰ Arat, 1994, p.102.

Turkey'⁵¹. Indeed, perhaps the young generation of feminists failed to transform society as radically as they desired but their contribution to the establishment of a liberal society where groups could associate and raise power in civil society can be seen as an important achievement. Some feminists interpreted liberal individualism as one of the essential conditions, along with equality and solidarity, of changing the patriarchal nature of society.

Feminist protests against a state which restricted civil rights and freedom, also contributed to the process of democratisation. The Campaign Against Battering provides an example for this process: a march was organized by feminists from various groups in May 1987 to protest a court decision to the effect that the husband's battering was not grounds for divorce in a court case in which a woman had had a miscarriage as a result of her husband's abuse. The judge referred to an old saying and said that 'you do not leave a woman's back without a stick, nor her belly without a kid' (such protests against the announcements of some judges in England during the 1980s and 1990s have also been observed, e.g. the infamous Judge Pickles). The second major step in the campaign was the publication of the jointly authored book *Cry, Let Everyone Hear* (1988), which contained the first-person accounts of twenty-three battered women.⁵² This campaign helped break the taboo on talking about violence against women, and more importantly helped women to voice a demand, for the first time, related exclusively to themselves and their bodies. The main activities of the new feminist movement have contributed to promoting liberalism and working to reconcile democracy and thus secularism in Turkey. A similar experience can be

⁵¹ Arat, 1994, p.105.

⁵² Sahika Yüksel, 'A Comparison of Violent and Non-violent Families', in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, (London: Zed, 1995), pp. 275-287, (p.281).

also observed in Pakistan: a women's demonstration in 1981 against the Islamization policy was the first demonstration since the military regime had taken power in 1977. This action was considered important as part of a general movement for democracy.

Unlike the Kemalist feminists, the younger generation did not expect the state to liberate women but rather aimed to generate power from civil society for women's liberation. For the first time in the Republic's history women acted as an autonomous body and stood against the authoritarian state. Political parties and unions were also influenced by a new influx of women who had been politicised by the women's movement. Although the movement tended to remain independent of the political parties, the political parties began to establish their women's sections and to accommodate women's demands for a political voice. As feminists wanted to defend and extend women's social and political rights, this was seen as a chance to transform male dominated political institutions and practices so as to make them more hospitable to women.

This interaction with political parties led feminists to work towards increasing women's voices in the political scene of Turkey through having more women in the Grand National Assembly. Nevertheless, feminists did not succeed in organizing an effective collective action until recently. In 1997, a group of feminists founded an institution, called KA.DER (Association for Training and Supporting Women Candidates), to increase women's representation in the parliament. The foundation of KA.DER has been well received by many sections of society including some male

politicians, businessmen and international institutions. Activities of KA.DER, such as its campaigns, seminars and workshops, often appear in the mainstream media. Two of these seminars were run by Lesley Abdela, who founded 'Group 300' in Britain in 1980 to increase the number of women in Parliament, and were sponsored by the British Council and the British Foreign Minister in 1997 and 1998. These seminars were received well by the members of KA.DER which provided a platform to share the British experience with the Turkish women.

One of the distinguishing features of the British experience is the sustained interaction between feminist movements and the labour movement.⁵³ During the period of Conservative government in the 1980s, there were three main sites of sustained feminist political practice: a continued intervention in labour movement politics, the development of a set of feminist 'institutions' in the form of the local authority women's committees, and a number of long-running campaigns.⁵⁴ It was partly due to this feminist political practice that the number of women MPs increased to 121 in the last election in 1997 when the Labour party came into power. There are some other factors for this successful election results. The Women's National Commission, which is an independent advisory body on women to the British government, produced an action plan for gender equality and produced 10 policy documents to go with it before the 1997 general election. The aim was to press every political party to say where they stood on certain issues, such as domestic violence, poverty, childcare, employment issues etc. The political parties took it seriously and accepted the policy documents with reservations on some points. This was seen as a

⁵³ For detailed discussion see Joni Lovenduski and Vicky Randall, *Contemporary Feminist Politics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.137-59.

⁵⁴ Lovenduski and Randall, 1993, p.136.

breakthrough in women's organization in Britain. Another positive move, introduced by the Labour Party, was to have an all-women shortlist in some winnable Labour constituencies to ensure that there would be more women in parliament. This achieved extra 35 women MPs in the house, but the method was deemed to be illegal. The case was taken to the Equal Opportunities Commission claiming discrimination under the Sex Discrimination Act. The Commission declared the process unlawful; those women who had been selected through the all-women shortlist before the Commission's decision, stood for election, but no more women were selected using this method. 'Positive discrimination' is not yet an issue in Turkey but KA.DER is trying to press every party to have a women MP quota system.

Considering the characteristics of the new feminist movement, Tekeli comments that it was perhaps the first authentic example of a democratic movement in Turkey. While feminist efforts aim for a more democratic society including responsibility for upholding secularism, feminists not only have to fight against the patriarchal values of the state but also have to share the political space with the Islamist ideology in this struggle and interact with the Islamist women's movement.

Islamist Women's Movement and Its Confrontation With Feminist Discourses

Since the mid-1980s, economic and political changes at the global level and the modernization process have shaped Turkey's contemporary political environment. One of the important outcomes of this period is that religious and ethnic identities, which were consciously kept by the state as matters to be dealt with within the private

sphere because of their threat to 'national identity' imposed by the establishment of the Turkish Republic since the 1920s, have started to become visible in the public sphere. Thus the public sphere became the arena of competing civil society movements that challenged the national, secularist, and homogeneous principles of the republican project of the public sphere. This political environment was, to some extent, supported by the military regime (1980-83) and by the following Özal government as mentioned earlier. For example, this particular period can be seen as responsible for the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in contemporary Turkey which was facilitated through the crucial area of education: the 1982 constitution made religious education in primary and secondary schools compulsory as part of an effort to implant a new state ideology: the Turkish-Islam synthesis. It was argued that 'the ideology rests on a strong belief in pan-Turkism, combined with a reliance on tradition and the strength of Islam'⁵⁵.

Since the early 1980s, the public sphere has been transformed and expanded through the emergence of and representations of alternative ideologies and institutions, one of which is 'political Islam'. The attempt of the 1980s regime to relocate political life beyond a right-left axis gave the Islamist groups a new impetus and a new status.⁵⁶ The Islamist party, Refah, made use of the political gap created by the 1980s military intervention and turned it to an advantageous position for itself. Soon after the military intervention, Refah achieved a hegemonic position in the political arena which extended to specific aspects of the public sphere where lay its sources of power

⁵⁵ Nermin Abadan-Unat & Oya Tokgöz, 1994, p.711.

⁵⁶ For further discussion see Nilüfer Göle, 1991; Ilkay Sunar and Binnaz Toprak, 'Islam in Politics: The Case of Turkey', *Government and Opposition*, (No: 18, 1983), pp. 421-441.

e.g. media, education. Islamist groups realized the importance of non-governmental-organizations (NGOs) much earlier than many other groups, and organized themselves, to fill the gaps in this area by setting up foundations, schools, mosques etc. In addition to these activities they began to form business partnerships among themselves, and to set up their own media. Thus, through a politically determined effort, the Islamist movement has created its own intelligentsia as well as its own middle-class of social actors who could play a leading role in the production, dissemination and consolidation of new models of sociability. Gradually they have gained sufficient power to run political institutions, such as local governments in big cities, and finally provided an alternative to the right-wing secular parties in December 1995.⁵⁷

There are two aspects to this Islamist political activity: first, the dynamics of participating in social and political life lie behind the politicisation of Islam. In the contemporary context of Turkey, Islam, as Nilüfer Göle argues, 'is not seen as being opposed to modernism, rather it has become an instrument to deal with problems of modern society'⁵⁸. Second, the people who come together around the ideology of Islam are not singular, unified or static. On the contrary, the Islamic ideology reproduces itself in different forms in the struggle for hegemonic power.

⁵⁷ The two right-wing secular parties failed to cooperate in a coalition government and this led the country to a new election in December 1995. Necmettin Erbakan's Islamist Welfare Party (the Refah Party) came out as the biggest -although with a small majority. Tansu Çiller, the leader of the right-wing True Path Party (DYP) and Turkey's first female prime minister, broke her election promises and negotiated with the Islamist party to form a coalition government. Turkey then saw its first Islamist prime minister.

⁵⁸ Göle, 1993, p.138.

Islamist women⁵⁹ have played a significance role in the politicisation of Islam, which has been achieved through the transformation of Islam from the private to the public sphere. Feride Acar, a Turkish feminist academic, defines the sociological profile of Islamist women as ‘untouched by the Kemalist reforms, raised in a patriarchal conservative, lower middle-class culture and migrating from rural areas and provincial towns to the metropolis’⁶⁰. These women were so easy for the Refah Party to manipulate that it did not hesitate to use them as an instrument during its election campaigns. For example, the party strongly encouraged women to take an active role in their election propaganda campaigns, but once the election was over these women were expected to go back to their home and back to their traditional roles.

It was quite disappointing for the secular feminist movement to see that it was the Islamist movement which could mobilize a greater number of women. The aim of female Islamist students’ first protest was to end the ban on headscarves from universities.⁶¹ Thus their attack was focused on institutions which are seen as the

⁵⁹ Saktanber points out that in the contemporary Turkish context, some people define their self-identities through stories arising from within Islamic meta-narratives and present themselves publicly as Muslims. They sometimes use the term *Suurlu* (conscious) Muslim in an effort to differentiate their Muslim identity from, by implication, “unconscious” or “fake” Muslims. Other people, although they may feel themselves culturally Muslim and/or possess faith, prefer to present themselves primarily not as Muslims, but as, for instance, Turks or Turkish citizens, and give precedence to different ethical meta narratives, such as nationalism, humanism, democratic liberalism, historical materialism, feminism, etc. in shaping “their narrative(s) of the self”. They often use the term “Islamist” to refer to the former, perceiving them “the other” in the sense of the repository of imagined opposites, rather than developing reflexive awareness of their own self-identity. Ayse Saktanber, ‘Becoming the “Other” as a Muslim in Turkey: Turkish Women vs. Islamist Women’, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Fall 1994, 11, pp. 99-134, (p.100). My use of the term ‘Islamist women’ should be understood against this backdrop.

⁶⁰ Feride Acar, ‘Women and Islam in Turkey’ in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli (London: Zed, 1995), pp. 46-66.

⁶¹ Until the 1980s, there were no veiled women among university students. However, they began to appear in relatively large numbers on university campuses during the 1980s, when radical fundamentalism emerged within the Islamic movements. This prompted the Council of Higher Education to ban what is called the ‘turban’, which is a scarf securely tied around the head by women. See Binnaz Toprak, ‘Women and Fundamentalism: The Case of Turkey’, in *Identity Politics and*

pillars of the modernization ideology of the Republic. The so-called 'Turban Movement' gradually became an issue of militant Muslim politics. The woman's body is placed here in an identity struggle as, as Foucault puts it, 'an inscribed surface of events'⁶². The unorganised demands for freedom of entry into universities and various urban spaces of modernity turned in a short time into organized sit-ins and demonstrations. The Turban Movement legitimised the existence of Islam in the public sphere and furthermore it has been the most visible indicator of the Islamization of politics, male and female relations, urban spaces, and daily practices.

The 'turban' has become a means of exploring, as Saktanber states, 'not only the identity of Muslim women in contemporary Turkey but also in comprehending the broader parameters of Islamic political activity'⁶³. This shows that gendered spatial divisions and practices remain a battleground between modernism and Islamism. Considering the ideologies of Islamism and modernism with regard to women's identities Göle comments:

Both images of women, the modernist and Islamist, subordinate female identities - whether relating to individual or collective consciousness - to values of modesty demanded by the populist nature of both ideologies. Yet

Women, (ed.) Valentine M. Moghadom, (Colorado & Oxford: Westview, 1994), pp. 293-306 (p.301). The turban issue still occupies the public and political debates. It continues to create a great conflict between the secular state and the Islamic fundamentalists. When Refah lost its power as the ruling party in 1997, all the state institutions including the military started a campaign to clear out all the 'fundamentalists' from the state institutions. Within this political structure, the government and state institutions have become more sensitive towards the Islamist movements. The state declared again in 1998 that the turban was banned in all education places and other state institutions. A number of operations have been conducted to deal with the 'turban problem'. For example, just before the 1998 academic year started the Ministry of Education moved 112 school teachers, who were wearing the turban, to other schools. For the same reason, 50 trainee teachers were sacked in Ankara. As reported in *Radikal* newspaper, the Ministry of Education prepares to continue this operation in Istanbul. (*Radikal*, 31 August, 1998, p.5).

⁶² Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*, (ed.) D. F. Bouchard, trans. by D. F. Bouchard and S. Simon, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p.148.

⁶³ Saktanber, 1994, p.102.

there is a shift in the image of the ideal women from “modern yet modest” to “Islamic thus modest”. Islamist veiling expresses the unapologetic assertion of modesty and religiosity in new self-definitions of Muslim women.⁶⁴

The identity politics of contemporary Islam, as the above quotation suggests, makes gender politics a central stake in the public debate in which secularists oppose Islamists. Instead of placing the Islamist women’s identity in opposition to the assumed identity of Turkish women, I would suggest that their effort to exist in the public sphere, as they are, could be seen as a way of dealing with dominant discourses and ideologies by juxtaposing them with alternative discourses.

Islamist women’s resistance to secular rules has put them in a position of defending freedom, democracy and human rights and thus questioning the state authorities. Through claiming the right to take part in the public sphere without giving up their Islamic identity, these women have gone beyond the role defined by their men and they have attempted to re-define their existence in the newly experienced public sphere. As Moghadam observes, the Turban Movement and the participation of women in it, became instrumental in radicalising the Islamist cause.⁶⁵

The very question of women’s place in the Islamist movement made the diverse discourses apparent among themselves and divided the Islamist movement into two groups; ‘Traditionals’ and ‘Radicals’. Those women, who took place in the Turban Movement, were seen as the selling point of Islam and become representatives of

⁶⁴ Göle, 1997, p.69.

⁶⁵ Valentine M. Moghadam, *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*, (London: Lynne Rienner Pub., 1993), p.161.

radical Islam. Yet their rebellious attitudes not only changed the representation of Islam, they shifted their discourse from speaking for Islam, that is speaking on behalf of Islamist men, whose struggles were established within multiple hegemonic power relations, to speaking on their own behalf, that is to and about themselves. In other words, they consciously chose to represent themselves and express their feelings and anxieties about Islam, patriarchy, and the Turkish state.⁶⁶ To what extent their discourse overlaps with the 'great' Islamic discourse is still an on going debate in Turkey. But while they seem to pose different questions for 'feminists' and 'Kemalist women' from which to examine the patriarchal and capitalist systems, their experience sometimes runs parallel with that of women who are from different class, ethnic, ideological and cultural backgrounds. Islamist women's struggle, however, includes some more complex issues than other women's struggle. It could be argued that as women they are oppressed by (Islamist and secular state) patriarchy and at the same time they are oppressed by the secular state because of their religious identity, i.e. their clothes.

Islamist women's writings and their interaction with opposing discourses have made them more visible in the public sphere. They have been writing in several publications and more importantly in their own women's magazines for over ten years. Women

⁶⁶ A group of women began to write in *Zaman* (Islamist) Newspaper in 1987. When they attempted to question their male colleagues' thoughts and ideas on gender relations, they were accused of being 'feminists'. They received constant criticism from their male colleagues but argued against the idea of being feminists. Because according to these Islamist women, feminist discourses in Turkey, which supported secularist and Western approach to feminism, were too distinct from their Islamist discourse to identify themselves with. However, their very experience shows that their literature enabled them to speak to and about themselves. This experience of Islamist women shows a similarity to the feminists of the early 1980s, who had a socialist background: some socialist magazines, such as *Aydınlık* ve *Somut*, devoted a page women's issues and this facilitated socialist feminist women to discuss and disseminate their ideas.

make up the majority of editors and writers in these magazines. This work experience undoubtedly provides an opportunity to choose alternative lifestyles, instead of being kept within the confines of traditional Islamic family values. These magazines represent the Islamist discourses of the 1980s and the 1990s and also reflect diversities among themselves. In her article 'Women and Islam in Turkey', Feride Acar examines why Islam exerts such a powerful attraction to women through studying the contents of three Islamic women's magazines *Kadın ve Aile* (Women and family), *Bizim Aile* (Our Family) and *Mektup* (Letter). She concludes that 'in all these magazines woman's role as wife, mother and home-maker (that is, her roles in the private sphere) was emphasized above any other role she may possibly fulfil'⁶⁷. But she also observes that each magazine has a critical view of certain aspects of these private roles.

Some of the Islamist women's magazines still continue today but they tend to present more diverse discourses than before. In particular, a drastic change can be observed in their discourse of those women who are called 'radical Islamist women'. They founded a women's journal in 1995 entitled *Kadın Kimliği* (*Women's Identity*). As is clear from its title, these women started to question women's identity in relation to Islam, other women, the state etc. Although other Islamist publications have occasionally paid attention to the question of 'women's identity', *Kadın Kimliği* is quite distinct from its counterparts in its approach to women and Islam. In the first issue, the editor stated their aim as following: 'We aim to discuss women's identity at

⁶⁷ Acar, 1995, p. 49

an intellectual level and to reinterpret women's identity defined by the Islamic rules. As an intellectual journal we will not only address housewives'⁶⁸. This statement underlines the fact that there are a number of educated, 'intellectual' Islamist women who are desperate to have a voice within their circle as well as at a larger national level.

In her article entitled 'Alternative Institutions/Groups and Islamist Women's Identity in Turkey'⁶⁹ Sevda A. Kural, a Turkish academic, has analysed the contents of *Kadın Kimliği*, some special issues of other Islamist women's magazines and some related books. Reviewing such materials, she concludes that Islamist circles have on their agenda the following women's issues: The meaning of woman/womanhood and the sexuality of women in the Western world, the objectification of women and abuse of women's sexuality in the capitalist system, women in Islam, the family life of the prophet Mohammed and his wife, women's rights to vote and to be elected in Islam, women's roles/duties in family life and in public life, and the style and rules of 'turban'. The new radical Islam stresses a strong anti-modernist view and argues that in the process of modernization women have lost their identity as women and became commodities shaped by capitalism.⁷⁰ This view appears as a counter argument to Western postfeminism which appeals to and encourages women to enjoy being consumers. As will be discussed in the case study later with regard to the British context, postfeminist discourses produced and re-produced by the media reduce the

⁶⁸ *Kadın Kimliği*, Editorial, March, 1995.

⁶⁹ Sevda Alankus Kural, 'Alternatif kurumlar/gruplar ve İslamci kadın kimliği', *Toplum ve Bilim*, (Fall 1997), No: 72, pp. 5-44.

⁷⁰ See Y. Çetinkaya for a discussion of the Islamist reaction to modernization, 'Modernizm ve Müslüman Kadın', *Kitap Dergisi*, no. 27 (May 1989), pp. 16-20.

concept of feminism to the status of a mere signifier and promote it as an object: a look, a style. This suggests that 'femininity' and 'feminism' in the 1990s could mainly be achieved through consuming the 'right' things.

Kural also observed that some of the women's magazines deal with politicised Islam, offer information about women's organizations, conferences, and their various activities in other Islamic countries as well as the women's movements in Turkey. She notices that their language is rather ironic and polemical towards the women who identify themselves as feminists. Although the majority of the Islamist women writers tend to perceive feminism as a product of Westernisation, which could offer nothing to a true Muslim woman, some of them do not avoid using feminist terminology, including such concepts as 'sexism' and 'patriarchy'. They claim that it is 'tradition' (they refer to traditional patriarchy which has grown out of modern-capitalist structures) not Islam that has oppressed and subordinated women. Nonetheless conceptualisation of Islam in this way by the Islamist women does not prevent them from criticizing Islamic male writers and intellectuals for not paying enough attention to empowering the position of women in society.

While the above researchers study Islamist women's publications to understand the ways in which the women in these magazines engage and negotiate with current Islamist discourses, some scholars like Arat concentrate on the relationship between feminism and Islam and argue that 'women are encouraged to take a more active part in the public sphere and are introduced to the concepts of individual rights. This

process of opening up could help women question the confines of the Islamic ideology they presently uphold'⁷¹. Indeed, some Islamist women used this process to question both the patriarchal nature of Islamic rules, and more importantly the secular state. Efforts of the Islamist women's movement have placed its ideology in the political arena of Turkey along with radical feminists and Kemalist feminists where they both oppose and negotiate with each other in their common aim to offer a project to liberate women.

The dialogue of Islamist women with feminists and the state in the context of 1990s Turkey can be seen as a step towards the democratisation process. Despite fundamental divergences on the issue of male-female equality, the younger generation of feminists have come to see the Islamist women's movement as progressive in the way that Islamist women, whose discourses intersect with that of feminism, began questioning gender-biased rhetoric in Islam. However, the Islamist women's acceptance of essentialist conceptions of women and the gender division of labour are rejected by these feminists.

To the extent that the Islamist and feminist discourses are located outside the structures of the state and outside western capitalism⁷², they share the same political space for their struggle. The two groups did not always work against each other. On the contrary some small women's groups even interacted with Islamist women. As a

⁷¹ Yesim Arat, 'Feminism and Islam: Considerations on the Journal of *Kadın ve Aile*' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli (London: Zed, 1995), pp. 66-78 (p.77).

⁷² In the introduction to *Women in Modern Turkish Society* (1995), Sirin Tekeli explains the reasons for women's political disinterest and argues that it was generated by a capitalistic production system, which was characterized by a specific division of labour between the sexes.

result of this mutual relationship, some feminists did not support the campaign that tried to prohibit the wearing of the veil. Furthermore, Tekeli is sceptical about the legitimacy of the politics of radical secularism as it may hinder ‘the building of a tolerant and pluralistic society, while at the same time blocking Islamic fundamentalism’⁷³. Some feminists show some respect to the fight Islamist women have given. For example, in one of her articles Tekeli addressed the women who wear the turban and asked whether they would respect her atheism: ‘While I do not share your thoughts and beliefs and try to persuade other people that what you argue is not correct, I respect your turban and in fact condemn those who pressure you to take it off. What about you? Do you accept me as I am?’⁷⁴. This emphasizes the fact that a number of feminists in Turkey acknowledge diversities among women and respect individual woman’s choices. Yet, as will be discussed later, there has not been an attempt within feminist theorizing to problematize the construction of gendered subjectivities and identities. Feminist criticism in Turkey has mainly focused on women’s oppression in terms of structures and systems.

Perspectives from the 1990s: A Search for Plurality and ‘Authenticity’

The struggle of the Islamist women as well as radical and Kemalist feminists indicate the competing ground of the political space women’s issues have in Turkey. As has already been pointed out, there are both divergences and convergences between these discourses. While, Kemalist women, for whom secularism is of primary importance,

⁷³ Sirin Tekeli, ‘Europe, European Feminism and Women in Turkey’ *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 1992, 15(1): 139-143 (p.141).

⁷⁴ Sirin Tekeli, *Qadınlar İçin*, (Istanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1988), p.381.

have criticized the demands of Islamic women for being part of a larger political strategy aimed at instituting an Islamic state in Turkey, feminist attitudes have also been criticized by Muslim women. For example, a group of Muslim women from Ankara responded to feminist groups and criticized them for trying to monopolize the struggle for women's liberation and for defining an exclusive, single, Western, feminist identity that ignores the fact that more than ninety percent of women in Turkey are Muslim.⁷⁵ The approach of socialist feminists to these debates differs, but like Islamist women, some of them have questioned the uncritical application of Western feminists' actions and labels, for example, as discussed earlier, borrowing the idea of a women's shelter model to cope with domestic violence. These debates have led some feminists to search for an authentic national feminism, a particular language and politics that would reflect the particularities of women in Turkey.

Non-hierarchical and independent forms of organizations, consciousness raising groups, and the nature of campaigns show that the Western feminist movements have had a significant impact on the formation of a feminist movement in Turkey. Sirman points to several similarities between feminism in Turkey and in the West, such as the questioning of the use of the female body that Turkish feminists share with their Western counterparts, emphasizing violence to the female body and raising the question of female virginity. Turkish feminists, as discussed earlier, also insisted on the political nature of the personal which led them to consider the specificity of the family in Turkish culture and its relation to the subordination of women.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Aysel Kurter *et al.*, "Kadınlara Ragmen Kadınlar İçin" Tavrına Bir Elestiri', *Kaktüs*, no. 4 (September 1988), pp. 25-27.

⁷⁶ Sirman, 1989, p.20-1.

Some feminists claimed that, as a result of this predominant one-way influence which occurred in the Turkish context, feminist politics failed to consider some particularities of women in Turkey. Writing in 1997, Ayse Düzkan points to this problem and suggests that ‘we should take into consideration certain factors specific to this culture when we try to politicise the personal’⁷⁷. There are indeed many factors specific to Turkish culture. For example, what most distinguishes Turkish culture from Western culture is its Islamic tradition. Islamic rules enforce a segregation of men and women not only in the public sphere but also in the private sphere. Unlike their Western sisters, Düzkan argues that there is no need for feminists here to try to socialize independently of men, i.e. in a form of women’s cafe or women’s cinema. Another factor is that men and women are recognized as atomised individuals in the Western context, whereas in Turkey women’s private matters, such as virginity or adultery, are regarded as state concerns, and furthermore, matters for the state to control through which women’s oppression is perpetuated.

There are some other factors specific to Turkey that feminist politics should consider. Being a developing country, Turkey is a country of great contrasts. For example, the female illiteracy rate is quite high (31%), at the same time it has the highest percentage (32%) of female academic personnel in the world.⁷⁸ Such discrepancy between these numbers is caused by its diverse regional conditions but more importantly by the state policies active since the Republican era (the conflict between

⁷⁷ Ayse Düzkan, ‘özgün feminism’, *Pazartesi*, No 30 (September 1997), p.4.

⁷⁸ This subject is studied in detail by Feride Acar. ‘Women in Academic Science Careers in Turkey’, in *Women in Science: Token Women or Gender Equality?*, (eds.) V. Stolte-Heiskanen *et al.* (New York: Berg, 1991).

Islamist and Kemalist ideologies and late capitalism), which also drastically affected women's paid employment. Almost half of the population live in the rural areas where women's labour -mostly in the field of agriculture- is not well paid and often not paid at all. Not only rural women but also urban women have little chance to work in paid employment. Thus, the specific conditions and problems of Turkish women in this respect differ considerably from their Western sisters. While issues such as part-time work and exploitation of women's labour have been raised by British feminists, Düzkan points out that feminists in Turkey 'must produce policies to deal more with women's demands to enter paid employment than capitalist exploitation of women's labour'⁷⁹. When Düzkan talks about the aims of *Pazartesi*, which is the only nationally distributed feminist publication, she states that 'we want to be professional and popular, local - which means Turkish - and 'politically correct' - that is feminist. We try to have our own agenda and write about women's issues from women's points of views'⁸⁰.

The appearance of Kurdish women in the political arena of feminism has added a new aspect to the debates over the authenticity of Turkish feminism. In the 1990s, as was emphasized earlier, not only women's issues but also issues of ethnic minorities have been assured a place on the agenda of political parties and of the state. This very political environment has prepared the conditions for an emergence of the Kurdish women's movement. The Kurdish women's movement aimed to subvert naturalized identities through a process of redefining Kurdish women who had been neglected for

⁷⁹ Düzkan, 1997, p.4.

⁸⁰ An interview with Ayse Düzkan cited in Grünell and Voeten, 1997, p.226.

so long in the women's movement of the 1980s. Like black feminists in Britain, Kurdish feminists collectively claim the right to define themselves, to speak for themselves and build solidarity as they articulate their differences. They began publishing their own journals, which are used as a means of setting up a dialogue with other women's groups in order to gain a space within contesting discourses of the late 1990s political context.

The autonomous feminist movement⁸¹ provided a space for women in diverse discursive positions to actively participate in 'the woman question' debates expressing different positions. The movement helped transform women's own concerns into a political issue and fostered a more pluralistic and democratic society. While current debates in Britain revolve around whether feminism is dead or alive, nationwide grassroots activism continues to expand in Turkey. A number of consciousness raising groups and women's research centres have been founded in small cities and rural areas throughout the country since the late 1990s. Feminism is seen as a social movement, which not only includes educated, middle-class professional women, but also includes other groups -younger women, women working in factories and shops and female students. As was illustrated on the International Women's Day, 8 March 1997, hundreds of women from different parts of the country with different ideologies (radical, Kemalist, Kurdish, socialist etc.) met in Istanbul on the day to march and call for a collective activism. Perhaps, as Sirman argues, 'feminists have not been able to piece together a coordinated and sustained

⁸¹ In Turkey, feminists agree that the feminist movement has become autonomous as its struggle was not linked to other broader political questions.

feminist politics'⁸² but there are many signs of feminist efforts to achieve it. In this respect, British experience differs to the extent that individualism, as was suggested by some British feminists in the previous section, has replaced a politics of common interest and collective social struggle in Britain. Consequently, it seems that today feminism as a social and political movement is more relevant to women's needs in Turkey, where women's positions and status are still defined in relation to the traditional family values, than it is in Britain. The concepts of individual rights and individualism are far from being similar in the British and Turkish contexts. Feminists in Turkey have argued that the patriarchal system and primarily the state and its suppressive tools (law, family, education, social security, health etc.) must be transformed in order to stop the subordination of women but their radical demands have not yet all been achieved. Thus, women will have to fight for some time to gain equal rights to men in the eyes of the law. The most crucial one perhaps is to change the article, which defines man as the head of the family, therefore restricting women's individual rights in the private sphere. On the other hand, feminists in Turkey have achieved a redefinition of feminism in order to respond to the needs of women in this culture. This effort, particularly, keeps it alive and relevant.

To sum up, examination of the evolution of feminist thought and activism in Turkey provides evidence to argue that even though Turkish feminists have been influenced in their activities by their Western counterparts the movement emerged out of the conditions of the 1980s and their demands that were specific to the culture and

⁸² Sirman, 1989, p.22.

tradition of the society. Feminists have succeeded in producing plural feminist discourses in a semi-democratic political environment with an emphasis on the importance of an authentic feminist struggle in Turkey. However, Western influence has had less effect on the academic study of women in Turkey than it has on political activism. Studies on and debates over 'the question of woman' in Turkey are not closely linked with theoretical and ideological developments in social sciences in the West. Some scholars, like Arat, are critical of social sciences in Turkey for neither catching up nor critically evaluating theoretical developments in women's research abroad. She claims 'there has never been an attempt to confront, integrate or reject contemporary approaches (including the challenges of postmodernism and feminism such as addressing the tensions between the universal ideals of feminism and the local constraints of the historically specific Turkish context)'⁸³. Although the issue of 'difference' has been recognized by feminist circles in Turkey, compared to the current theoretical debates in Britain discussed in the previous section, feminist scholars have not attempted to theorize the concept of 'difference'.

While one of the current problems identified by British feminists is putting theory into practice, the opposite situation is being experienced in Turkey. Lack of theory and academic work on the question of woman and gender as a category of social analysis undoubtedly make it difficult to understand women in a specific cultural context and in the socio-political formations in which they live. Feminist criticism needs to open up its methodological and theoretical debates to other theoretical and

⁸³ Yesim Arat, 'Women's Studies in Turkey: From Kemalism to Feminism', *New Perspectives on Turkey*, (Fall 1988), pp. 119-135 (p.130).

ideological developments in social sciences in order to problematize gendered subjectivities and identities, to analyse inequalities and differences between women and men as well as differences among women. Yet it should be pointed out that the amount of research and translation on the subject has increased since the 1990s, which is a positive sign for future feminist research.

CHAPTER TWO

THE WOMEN'S MAGAZINE AS A DIVERSE FORM OF POPULAR CULTURE

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the contemporary history of feminism which provides a context for the account of the development of women's magazines in Turkey and Britain. In this chapter, I put the magazines in question into the context of the women's magazine market, with an aim of exploring the development of this popular cultural form in terms of its content and its industry. While women's magazines are a medium and the primary mechanism by which groups of women come together to redefine themselves and their worlds, to renegotiate their identities, to articulate their goals and hopes, they are at the same time commercial products and part of a large media industry. As Ballaster *et al.* put it 'magazines are part of an economic system as well as part of an ideological system by which gender difference is given meaning'¹. The nature of the women's magazine as a commodity form are examined from the perspective of the historical development of the women's magazine and its market, and the editorial control of the magazine and the role of editors in producing contemporary understanding of femininity for mass consumption.

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, I present a historical overview of women's magazines respectively in Britain and Turkey. The focus is on the recent

¹ Ballaster *et al.*, *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Women's Magazine*, (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 9-10.

past and the current situation of the market, which provides a better understanding of the context in which *Kim* and *Kadinca* in Turkey, and *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* in Britain emerged and have become significant. This survey aims to position these magazines in their social/cultural context to understand how they differ from the rest of the magazines and to examine their market share within a large women's magazine market. Second, I discuss the responsibilities and the role of the editors in the production process. This perspective allows us both to explore how the women's magazine editors cope with the market values, and it also enables us to investigate their approach to feminism. At the end of the chapter, I introduce the women's magazines analysed in this study. As the form women's magazine refers to a range of texts, before I start, it is important to discuss different types within this form of popular culture.

Types of Women's Magazines

Women's magazines today constitute a significant portion of the periodical publishing market in the West and in developing countries like Turkey.² The scale of their (female) audience and the inspiration of their specialism, femininity, help to differentiate this genre of periodicals from other forms of the media. A lucrative business, targeting mainly female readers, (as will be discussed later they also attract

² In the UK, for example, general women's titles account for the largest share of titles, around 39% in 1994. This sector covers a broad range of titles, which include a wide array of topics, including fashion, beauty, health and fitness, sex and relationships, showbiz gossip, human interest stories, recipes, home and garden tips, and care of the family. *Key Note* 1991-1996. *Key Note* is a market research specialist company which encompasses a wide and diverse range of market sectors. Statistics for the British women's magazine market is quoted from *Key Note*'s 1991-96 report.

some male readers), women's magazines are considered to be the source of many inspirations and ideas, and thus to have some influence on social conditions. As Marjorie Ferguson comments, women's magazines 'help to shape both a woman's view of herself, and society's view of her'³. Women's magazines play a variety of roles which can be put into three main categories: they are forms of entertainment, sources of education and trade journals. Historically, women's magazines have allowed for two-way communication between readers and writers; they have altered, to some extent, the power structure between the writer and the reader. These different roles of women's magazines can be seen as interrelated.

The women's magazine is in itself a vast term which includes *Vogue*, *Woman*, *Good Housekeeping*, not to mention *Cosmopolitan*, *Spare Rib* and many lesser known feminist publications. Furthermore, magazines for adolescent girls can also be included in this genre since they aim to offer information and advice to readers concerning the complexities of growing up female, and also to provide an early introduction to the habit of consuming women's magazines. Thus women's magazines are marked by a certain variety in style and content. Despite the number of specialized women's magazines, as Linda Steiner points out, 'there is not a magazine for "every" woman. Only readers who represent markets desirable to advertisers are served'⁴. This implies the fact that advertising and women's magazine publishing are inseparable for this particular business.

³ Marjorie Ferguson, *Forever Feminine*, (London: Heinemann, 1983), p. 1.

⁴ Linda Steiner, 'Would the Real Women's Magazines Please Stand-up...For Women' in *Women and Media: Content/Careers/Criticism*, (ed.) Cynthia M. Lont, (Wadsworth Publication, California, 1995), pp. 100-108 (p.100).

Contemporary women's magazines might be divided into five types: fashion and style oriented, (e.g. *Elle*), housewife magazines, (e.g. *Woman's World*), career women's magazines, (e.g. *Cosmopolitan*, *Options*), teenage magazines, (e.g. *Just Seventeen*), and feminist magazines (e.g. *Spare Rib*, *Everywoman*). Feminist magazines appear to be the less profitable type for the magazine business as they often choose not to include advertising. As will be discussed later, none of the big publishing companies includes a feminist oriented magazine in their list. Therefore, feminist publications are discussed in a separate section from commercial women's magazines.

Since the roots of women's magazines as mass media can be traced back to the early twentieth century, a brief history of women's magazines, then their current situation in the 1990s are examined below in Britain and Turkey.

THE EVOLUTION OF WOMEN'S MAGAZINES AND THE MARKET IN BRITAIN

British Women's Magazines: From the Victorian to the Postmodern Era

Although a historical overview of periodicals aimed at women should date back to three hundred years ago when the first publications began⁵, a considerable range of publications and an increase in their number began in the last century during the

⁵ Some of the important studies undertaken on the evolution of the British women's magazines and its industry are: Cynthia White's book *Women's Magazines 1693-1968*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1970), records Victorian and Edwardian publishing. Brian Braithwaite's book *Women's Magazines: The First 300 Years*, (London: Peter Owen, 1995) examines the style and content of some of the older magazines in the last three century in Britain. Marjorie Ferguson also examines the evolution of the women's magazines in Britain but she focuses on the twentieth century in her book *Forever Feminine*, (London: Heinemann, 1983).

Victorian period. David Doughan suggests that Victorian women's periodicals may be divided into three broad categories: commercial, political and organizational.⁶ Yet he observes some overlap, particularly between the last two groups. For the purpose of this study, this chapter aims to trace the evolution of the women's magazine industry with particular emphasis on the second half of the twentieth century.

Some new titles were introduced in the inter-war years but many of the magazines existing before and during the war failed to survive in post-war years. There were some exceptions, such as *Woman's Journal*, *Woman's Own*, *Woman's Weekly*, *Vogue*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Woman*, which have survived until the present. The editors in the immediate post-war years were conscious of class differences regarding income, employment and education of their audiences. Some magazines aimed to generate different interest areas for working-class females. *Woman*, for example, was based on this idea: 'the entertainment and enlightenment of working-class women could extend into the areas of interest and expertise previously found only in the more middle-class monthlies'⁷. Analyses of women's magazines concerning this period show that women's magazines contributed to post-war economic and political matters by encouraging the female labour force back to kitchen concerns and the homemaker role.⁸ Following the post-war years, different social, cultural and economic climates marked each decade in the second half of the twentieth century which evoked

⁶ David Doughan, 'British Women's Serial' in *Victorian periodicals: A Guide to Research*, (eds.) Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1989), vol. 2, pp. 67-73, (p.67).

⁷ Ferguson, 1983, p.18.

⁸ Ferguson, 1983, p.21.

different responses in terms of not only the structure of the business, but also of titles and messages in women's magazines.

In the post-war years, the market witnessed fierce competition for new editorial products and a concentration of publishing power in fewer corporate companies.⁹ While some of the titles disappeared from the market some of them integrated in order to compete with the new electronic media. Women's magazines have exploited the entire range of organizational strategies since the inter-war years and have a relatively long history of financial success and high circulation, for example *Woman* and *Woman's Own*. Particularly, through mergers, chain and corporate takeovers, name and format changes, transformation of editorial policy and specialization, the magazine industry has established itself as a successful commercial business within the media industries.

The first major women's magazine launched in post-war years (1949) was *Vanity Fair*, which created an entirely new ambience and claimed to be the first genuine fashion magazine for young women.¹⁰ The marriage of Princess Elizabeth (1947) and royal family affairs had a seminal influence on *Vanity Fair* and other women's magazines. Different aspects of the royal family played a significant role in the emergence of a new industry. In the second half of the century women's magazines were saturated for decades with photographs and articles on the royal family. Another

⁹ Daily Newspapers Ltd. initiated the trend, buying The Amalgamated Press, Publishers of *Woman's Weekly* in 1959. This move intensified competition and led Odhams Press Ltd. to buy first The Hulton Press (1959), and later George Newnes Ltd. (1959), publishers of *Woman's Own*, then the only real threat to *Woman*. Ferguson, 1983, p.23.

¹⁰ Braithwaite, 1995, p.64.

new title of the post-war years was *She*. The arrival of *She* (1955) was perceived as breaking new ground for a women's magazine. Braithwaite describes it as 'a new idea in magazines for women. It had one simple ambition, to entertain, and was a unique mix of punning headlines, peculiar photographs, jokes, personalities and chumminess'¹¹. These two magazines can be identified as predominantly style and fashion oriented magazines.

As the industry evolved in the post-war years, magazines which had survived the war, such as *Woman* (1937) and *Woman's Own* (1932), expanded their share of the market. They were innovative in their outlook and presentation using colour advertising. By the end of the 1950s, they had gained considerable commercial success. As shown by their contents, they could and still can be categorized as magazines for housewives. *Woman* and *Woman's Own*, as Braithwaite notes,

contented themselves with treading the familiar editorial paths, including the customary departmental features like cookery, knitting, fiction, letters, health and social advice, home furnishing...but what they did bring to the part was smart writing, brilliant artwork and a considerable amount of colour, in both senses of the word.¹²

According to Braithwaite, their success stems not from their innovative content but rather from their visual quality and style. It was produced by a print process, called photogravure, which enabled large numbers of colourful magazines to be produced cheaply.¹³ Advertising and colourful visual materials were subsequently recognized as

¹¹ Braithwaite, 1995, p.67.

¹² Braithwaite, 1995, p.71.

¹³ Janice Winship (prepared by), 'Femininity and Women's Magazines' in *The Changing Experience of Women*, Unit 6, Open University, U221 Unit 5-6, (1983), p.32.

important sources for running magazines successfully. As Cynthia White comments 'the boom in women's periodicals has in fact paralleled the boom in domestic consumption and the vast expansion in advertising which has accompanied it'¹⁴. These new aspects of magazine publishing led the publishers in the 1950s to work out new strategies: a reasonable publishing strategy was to launch new high quality colour magazines in order to compete. Through this strategy the publishers became more dependent on advertisers for their revenue. Consequently the financial power of the advertisers was heavily felt within the women's magazine business: as production costs rose in the 1950s, the magazines became more dependent on advertising. Many of them faced financial problems and some of them disappeared from the market. Only two magazines, from those launched in the 1950s, survive today, *She* and *Woman's Realm*.

The women's magazine business experienced fundamental changes in the 1960s. Some of the major publishing houses began to expand their interests into magazines. Integration increased and many mergers appeared in the women's magazine market. As a result of this process, the International Publishing Corporation -IPC-, which was formed in 1968, owned the major women's magazines including old, successful rivals from the 1950s such as *Woman* and *Woman's Own*.¹⁵ IPC was regarded as the giant publishing empire in the 1960s; among other international and independent companies, IPC led the market.

¹⁴ White, 1970, p.201.

¹⁵ For further discussion see Braithwaite, 1995, p.76.

Nova, which was launched in 1965 by IPC and George Newnes, proclaimed to be 'radical' in its content and style; the editorial defined it as 'The New Magazine for the New Kind of Woman'. *Nova* addressed the social and sexual changes of the 1960s with the aim of creating a 'new' woman image. A new woman was constructed who was 'designated as intelligent, thinking and worldly. She would be well educated, radical, sceptical and definitely not the typical reader of the women's weeklies, with their mundane concentration on shopping and cooking'¹⁶. According to advertising agencies, *Nova* represented 'the counter-culture, absolutely right for the 1960s, when the mood favoured innovation and enterprise'¹⁷. *Nova* addressed a 'new' generation of young women whose experiences as women differed a great deal from those of their mothers. While it aimed to respond to young women's demands, the older generation often reacted to the magazines' considerable openness in discussing sexual matters. Although quality advertisers used *Nova* in its early years, *Nova* did not catch up with other glossies' high circulation, such as *Vogue* and *Queen*, thus financial difficulties led *Nova* to disappear from the market in 1975.

In the 1960s, the publishing business explored new areas in magazine publishing. The significance of the new phenomenon 'the teenager' was recognized by the business. Millions of teenagers were seen as potential customers for the market. Although women's magazines in this decade experienced many stops and starts, the publishing business was growing with the emergence of new titles aimed at teenagers, such as *Honey*, *19*, and *Jackie*. In the 1960s, the main strategy the industry adopted was to

¹⁶ Braithwaite, 1995, p.79.

¹⁷ Braithwaite, 1995, p.81.

address particular interests and consumer markets rather than considering only age and class divisions. Changing lifestyles have led to more precise targeting, particularly towards specific demographic groupings, such as career women, country dwellers, women with young families, young housewives, teenagers and affluent women over 40. Because of these market strategies, as Winship notes, neither their readership nor their advertising, on which they were heavily dependent for revenue, overlapped.¹⁸

The 1970s marked a significant time for the feminist movements and for women's magazines in Britain. As the feminist movements evolved, throughout the 1970s women's domestic roles as wife and mother were challenged. This forced publishers and editors in Britain and also abroad to re-consider the messages that women's magazines had conveyed quite acceptably for decades. The images and messages of women appeared to change along with the changing female goals, values and roles. *Cosmopolitan*, launched in 1972, is a good example of the kind of content which has had an effect on the majority of women's glossy magazines since the 1970s. White describes its style, and the context in which *Cosmopolitan* emerged as follows:

Many of the views expressed in *Cosmopolitan* may be unacceptable because they challenge doctrine and tradition, but in raising issues and discussing problems more frankly and fully than has ever before been possible in the women's press, *Cosmopolitan* is exposing and meeting the submerged needs of all sorts and conditions of women, united by the circumstances of their lives.¹⁹

¹⁸ Winship, 1983, p.33.

¹⁹ Cynthia L. White, *The Women's Periodicals in Britain 1946-76*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1977), p. 58.

Changes in the dominant themes and in the editorial tone, which became less authoritarian, showed that, as Ferguson points out, 'the range of topics that could be talked about widened, and became less inhibited by tradition or taboo'²⁰. Such changes adopted by women's magazines helped women to increase their awareness about their rights and bodies. Previously untouched subjects such as sex before marriage and rape suddenly became important issues in some women's magazines. Although such issues were a selling point for some magazines, it became evident that not everybody was likely to approve of them. As a result of different reactions to the rather 'radical' perspective of some women's magazines, more specialized magazines began to emerge in the market which concentrated on fashion, on lifestyle, or on this new 'liberated' attitude.

The magazine business witnessed ups and downs in the 1970s. However, IPC retained its powerful place in the market. IPC tended to purchase titles and merge them into other magazines, but some of them only survived a short time. Some magazines' commercial and editorial success, like *Cosmopolitan*, provided an inspiring model for other magazines. For example, *She*, which had been launched in 1955, followed *Cosmopolitan*'s lead in the 1970s in showing enthusiasm for sexual issues. Another example was *Company* (1978), which followed a close editorial strategy to *Cosmopolitan* and attracted a similar readership.

²⁰ Ferguson, 1983, p. 84.

The 1980s witnessed an increase in the number of women's magazines; over fifty new titles were launched.²¹ The first major magazine launched was *Options* which is still published today. *Options* was aimed at upper middle-class women aged over thirty, as Braithwaite comments, 'it was designed to fill a gap between *Cosmopolitan* and *Good Housekeeping*'²². EMAP (East Midland Allied Press, for many years a publisher of regional newspapers) entered into the teenage female market and also the wider range of adult women's magazines in the 1980s. EMAP launched *Just Seventeen* (1983) which has become a successful title within the teenage publishing market. EMAP appeared to dominate the younger market and launched many titles like *More!*, *New Woman*, and *Elle*. These magazines were in competition with *Cosmopolitan* in the late 1980s. In particular, when *New Woman* started in the States it was claimed that it looked very much like *Cosmopolitan*. Braithwaite describes *New Woman* in the 1990s as follows:

The serious subjects are still covered, campaigns waged and plenty of advice given - but *New Woman* has joined the ranks of the magazines that like to spell it all out, a leader in the contemporary vogue for forthright, frank, and explicit sex advice and instruction - without a hint of titillation, of course. On the other side...*New Woman* runs serious issues and some of its campaigns have won awards in the publishing industry.²³

Many women's magazines in the 1980s aimed to address 'independent women', particularly women in employment. This trend even affected the titles of some magazines, for example, a new publication entitled *Working Woman* was introduced into the market in the mid-1980s.

²¹ The 1980s witnessed a rapid growth for the magazine industry, the total number of magazine titles having increased by 73% and total circulation by around 18% between 1985 and 1994. *Key Note 1991-1996 Report*.

²² Braithwaite, 1995, p. 115.

²³ Braithwaite, 1995, p. 138-9.

The above characteristics of young women's magazines, which dominated the market in the 1980s, can be linked to the efforts shown by women to improve their lives. Indeed, significant changes in women's lives observed in the 1970s and 1980s affected this particular style of women's magazines. In this period, women had more control over their fertility as the availability of contraception and abortion increased; women were better educated than ever before, more work opportunities away from domestic duties arose for women; economical and financial factors caused more women to work outside the home as the unemployment rate among their husbands increased; and finally a career for a woman increasingly became a respectable issue. These changes had a major influence not only on the way in which women began to perceive themselves but also on women's magazines' representations of female subjectivities. These new conditions and attitudes, which altered the face of women's publishing in the 1970s and 1980s, presented a 'heterogeneous collection of view points, reflecting many different concepts, priorities and interpretations concerning the current situation of women'²⁴. Diversity reflected in the range of titles led magazine editors, who also faced these changes in society, to confront the task of deciding how, and to what extent, to deal with these modifications of social acceptability, and to consider how much they were going to respond to these changes.

As the range of women's magazines has illustrated in the last three decades, some responded more than others to the social changes and the feminist movements. Considering their contents, for instance, they range from the society oriented *Harpers*

²⁴ White, 1977, p. 61.

& *Queen* to the lifestyle magazines of *Options* and *Woman's Journal*. Others such as *Vogue* and *Elle* tend toward fashion as their main content area, whilst *New Woman* and *Cosmopolitan* deal with the issues of the 'liberated' women, such as career women.

The dominant liberal policies of the conservative government in the 1980s, however, promoted an individual quest for self-improvement and it also became the dominant message of most women's magazines. Gradually commercial women's magazines shrank away from discussing anything in a political context, and thus feminism filtered into popular and commercial discourses in such a way that it has increasingly become depoliticised and recognized as a commercial value. It is partly due to these changes that sex has become an important issue on the agenda of many young women's magazines since the 1980s.

The magazines launched in the 1990s support the argument that it was the sex decade for women. For example, a magazine called *For Women* (1992) quite explicitly deals with sex. Its text appears to be as open as the pictures, including oral sex, sex aids etc. The editor describes their aim as follows: 'the success of recent supplements on sex with more conventional women's magazines convinces us that the time is now right to launch *For Women*. Our aim is to push back the boundaries of women's magazines',²⁵.

²⁵ Quoted in Braithwaite, 1995, p. 151-2.

The booming industry of women's magazines has for decades been seen as a reflector of female wants, needs and preoccupations. One of the important changes reflected in the magazines in the 1990s can be identified as their enhanced coverage of women's health. Health and fitness developed as specialized subjects for women's magazines publishers. Magazines like *BBC Good Health* and *Top Santé* were launched in the early 1990s. *Top Santé*, a popular French title, described itself as a magazine which 'covers all aspects of health and beauty, well-being, psychology, sexuality, fitness and diet. *Top Santé* will meet the real needs of today's women every month'²⁶.

It is important to note for the analysis of women's magazines later that currently the people who are directly involved in the editing and writing process of women's magazines are mostly women, both in Britain and Turkey. On the other hand, the publishers are still often male, as are the owners of the corporations that own the magazines. As the Turkish editors point out, this very structure of women's magazines might occasionally affect the decision making process on certain subjects, such as promotion products, advertising and to a lesser extent the content (see Appendix A, p.vii). This indicates the conflicting power relations in the women's magazine publishing world, and furthermore, the power of ownership over the content of magazines.

²⁶ Quoted in Braithwaite, 1995, p. 153.

UK Women's Magazines Top Publishers and the Market in the 1990s

The women's magazine market is a dynamic and growing market. Despite the number of women's titles already available, publishers appear to constantly seek new avenues into which they can launch. According to the *Key Note* report in 1995, the circulation of the top 50 best-selling women's titles increased by 4.6% between 1993 and 1994. The exact number of women's titles is difficult to determine, due to the overlap with other markets, in 1994, according to *Key Note*, there were an estimated 150 titles targeted particularly at women. In 1994, women's magazines accounted for around 56.7% of total sales revenue from consumer magazines, with sales revenue for women's magazines at £415m. Advertising revenue in women's titles has maintained a more stable share of the total consumer magazines figure, at around 53.4%; in 1994, advertising revenue from women's magazines reached around £250m. Register-Mail analysis of advertising in the UK's leading women's magazines for the year to July 1994, revealed that the three most commonly advertised product types were female fragrances, skincare and women's fashions. These were followed by motorcars, men's fragrances, department store advertising, and suntan products. As the 1994 figures show advertising is an important source of income for women's magazines as well as their sales of copies. In 1994, the average price of a woman's magazine was £1.38; for weeklies it was £0.61 and for monthlies £1.83.²⁷ Table 1 shows prices of some of the top women's magazines in 1997.

²⁷ *Key Note* Report, 1991-1996.

With regard to their publication period, women's magazines have four main categories: monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly and weekly. The percentage of these publications is shown in Table 2. (All tables are presented in Appendix C). Table 3 provides some statistics to illustrate the market share of the major women's magazines (monthly, bi-monthly and weekly) in Britain. *Key Note* reports that circulation of the top 50 best-selling women's titles increased by 4.6 % between 1993 and 1994. Table 4 shows the top 20 best-selling women's monthly magazines by circulation.²⁸ Circulation figures of the monthly magazines illustrate that the largest-selling titles are those which mainly deal with issues such as sex, beauty, fashion and home.

According to the National Readership Survey (NRS), some 86% of adults read consumer magazines in the UK. Around 78% read women's weeklies and some 68% read women's monthlies.²⁹ NRS also shows that in an average week a little over half of all women in the UK read a women's weekly magazine, while slightly more than half read a women's monthly magazine each month. On average, *Cosmopolitan* is read by 4.1 adults per copy and the total number of readers is 2,414,000; *New Woman* is read by 2.4 adults per copy and the total number of readers is 677,000.

²⁸ The *Key Note* Report states that while this is a fiercely competitive market, circulation is not necessarily the main criteria for success. Reputation within their field can carry enormous weight and, while immeasurable, be of greater importance. *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Good Housekeeping*, for example, are synonymous with their markets.

²⁹ Although women are by far the heaviest readers of women's magazines, some magazines attract some men, notably the more glossy home interest monthlies, such as *House & Garden* and *Country Homes & Interiors*, for which male readership is around 34%. *Key Note* 1991-1996.

In her research in the mid-1970s, White noted that ‘the most successful magazines are those which have brought themselves into line with modern standards of presentation, are edited skilfully and responsibly, and give good value for money’³⁰. The same characteristics seem to apply to the commercial success of the women’s magazines of the 1990s. Today the structure of the women’s magazine industry is highly concentrated. In terms of circulation, nine companies effectively control the production of women’s magazines in Britain -approximately 43% of the total number of titles.

Publishers’ shares of the circulation of the top 64 women’s magazines
(% of total circulation), 1994³¹

IPC	37.7
H. Bauer	13.9
National Magazine Com.	12.1
EMAP	8.1
G&J of the UK	6.1
DC Thomson & Company	5.4
Conde Nast	2.8
Newhall Pub. Ltd.	2.7
Hello Ltd.	2.5
Others	8.7
Total	100.0

Some of the better known titles published by three top companies are:

EMAP

Elle (fashion and style mag.)
Just Seventeen (teenage mag.)
New Woman (career women’s mag.)
More! (teenage mag.)
Looks (fashion and style mag.)

IPC Magazine Ltd.

Options (career women’s mag.)
Marie Claire (career women’s mag.)
Woman (housewife mag.)
Woman’s Own (housewife mag.)
Woman’s Journal (housewife mag.)

³⁰ White, 1977, p. 61.

³¹ It is quoted from Audit Bureau of Circulations/Key Note

National Magazine Co. Ltd.*Company* (career women's mag.)*Cosmopolitan* (career women's mag.)*Good Housekeeping* (housewife mag.)*She* (career women's mag.)*Harpers & Queen* (society oriented mag.)***Feminist Publications and Publishers***

Like any other social movement, the impact of feminism varied at different levels and in different sections of society. While some people were very open to it, others questioned and/or opposed it. Feminists have managed to use different channels of communication to disseminate their ideas. The feminist movements, to a great extent, have been concerned with writing, printing, and reading since the 1970s in Britain. This has created enormous diversity in feminist publications including left/black/lesbian-gay publishers with a strong feminist line. The major publishers in this field in the last two decades were Virago, the Women's Press and Pandora. These publishers aimed to reflect and express new ideas coming from the Women's Liberation Movement. At first they focused on recovering lost classics by women writers, and later they expanded into modern fiction and non-fiction - women's studies, history, autobiography, literary and cultural criticism, poetry and health.³² The Women's Press was founded in 1974, two years later Virago was established, and about ten years later Pandora began as the 'feminist trade imprint' of the mainstream

³² Diana Leonard, 'Publication Strategies - Involvement in and Through Scientific Media' in *F.A.M. Proceedings of the International Conference "Involvement and Identity, Women and the Women's Movement in Science and Politics"*, Munich, 10-14 September, 1986, pp. 24-47, (p.25).

publisher Routledge and Kegan Paul, with independent editorial control.³³ There are some smaller publishers, such as Onlywomen, Sheba, Stramullian, Black Womentalk, and Change. These publishers have played a significant role in creating a platform for new ideas and new authors from different ethnic backgrounds and sexualities. Some other radical and/or commercial publishers like Pluto Press and Zed Press include feminist work in their publications.

Feminists found a significant voice within a growing publishing market and launched *Spare Rib* in 1972 which described itself as a 'women's liberation magazine'. *Spare Rib*, as Faludi puts it, 'achieved its aim of putting women's liberation on the news-stands'³⁴. Indeed it became an influential source of the feminist movements in Britain. As will be discussed later, although *Cosmopolitan* has aligned itself with feminist concerns since the 1970s, Braithwaite describes *Spare Rib* as 'the antithesis of *Cosmopolitan*: unglossy, uncommercial, radical, feminist, political'³⁵. *Spare Rib* was recognized as unique in providing a clear cultural space opposing the mainstream and never depended on consumer advertising. It is interesting to note that a glossy magazine, *Cosmopolitan*, from within the market, as Faludi writes, 'published an eighteenth-birthday tribute to *Spare Rib*, congratulating it on being "one of the world's longest running and most widely read feminist magazines" and praising its "hard-edge political thinking"'³⁶.

³³ Leonard, 1986, p.26.

³⁴ Susan Faludi, *Backlash*, (London: Vintage, 1992), p.137.

³⁵ Braithwaite, 1995, p.102.

³⁶ Faludi, 1992, p. 138.

When *Spare Rib* collapsed in 1993, *Everywoman*, which was launched in 1985, continued to follow a similar line in women's publishing throughout the early 1990s. However, as Leonard notes, while *Spare Rib* remained radical, *Everywoman* set out to be a more mainstream rival to *Spare Rib*³⁷, and survived until 1996. They were both distributed at a national level. Nevertheless, some feminist journals, which are of most interest to academics, like *Women's Review* (1985), *Women's Studies International Forum* (1977), *Feminist Review*, (1978) are still going strong. This implies the fact that feminism has flourished at an institutional, academic level; it has been recognized by different disciplines as an important subject of study over the last two decades. Thus the death of *Spare Rib* and *Everywoman* can be linked to the status of feminism in the 1990s in Britain discussed in chapter one: feminism increasingly became the subject of theoretical debates and academic publications at the same time the popular press appropriated feminist discourses into their content.

³⁷ Leonard, 1986, p.34-35.

THE EVOLUTION OF WOMEN'S MAGAZINES AND THE MARKET IN TURKEY

Ottoman and Republican Women Express Themselves Through Their Publications

As discussed in chapter one, the modernization -or westernisation- process of the Ottoman Empire which started in the late nineteenth century did not only include the political structure of society but aimed to transform the whole society -education, economy, legal issues and public life. The Ottoman women themselves began to question their position in society. Woman's rights and the situation of women, especially within Islamic tradition, became the subject of public discussions.

The voices of Ottoman women began to make themselves heard in magazines³⁸ and newspapers³⁹. One of the significant magazines published towards the end of the 19th century was *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (Women's Journal). This magazine was published between 1895-1908 and had 'the longest publication history of any women's magazine'⁴⁰. One of the diverse effects of this magazine was to create, for the first time, a forum for the dissemination of information, by, for, and between women.

³⁸ Seven women researchers from the Istanbul Women's Library have undertaken research on women's periodicals published during the late Ottoman period and written in Ottoman Turkish. *Istanbul Kütüphanelerindeki Eski Harflü Türkçe Kadın Dergileri Bibliyografyası*, compiled by Zehra Toska, Serpil Çakır, Tülay Gençtürk, Sevim Yılmaz, Selmin Kurç, Gökçen Art, Aynur Demirdirek, (Istanbul, Metis Yayınları, 1993).

³⁹ *Terakki* is known as the first newspaper that devoted space to women's letters in 1868. The following year *Terakki* newspaper began to publish a magazine called *Terakki-i Muhadderat* which is considered to be the first Ottoman women's magazine. For further information see *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, by Serpil Çakır, (Istanbul: Metis, 1996), p.23-24.

⁴⁰ Çakır, 1996, p. 27.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the rise of feminist ideology in the West was noticed by, and had a long term influence on, women within the Turkish 'elite', especially in big cities like Istanbul. One of the outcomes of this influence was the publication of *Kadınlar Dünyası* (Women's World), which began in 1913, was published irregularly during the First World War, and again regularly until 1920. For the first time there was cooperation with women from abroad. *Kadınlar Dünyası*, as a rule, employed women in preference to men. A Turkish feminist scholar Meral Akkent writes 'it was a journal trying to assert feminist demands'⁴¹; it was regarded as a magazine which stimulated the feminist movement in the late Ottoman period. Readers of *Kadınlar Dünyası* initiated the founding of the association for the protection of women's rights. Their discussions and demands were published in the journal. The main issues these women raised were a call for the end to polygamy and for changes in the Islamic family law, especially the divorce law which favoured men.

Çakır identifies two types of women's magazines in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The first one was owned and written only by women, the second one was owned by men and mostly written by men.⁴² Her analysis points to a fundamental difference between the two and shows that the latter constructed women from a male perspective: womanhood and women's roles were defined through male values, whereas the former represented women's demands and their points of view.

⁴¹ Meral Akkent, 'History of the Women's Movement in Turkey' a paper presented at a conference in Bonn, November 1-4 1991, Conference proceedings: *The Institutionalization of the Women's Movement: Opportunities and Risks*.

⁴² Çakır, 1996, p.40.

The establishment of the Republic resulted in the voices of women being heard less as the number of women's magazines began to decrease. For example, between 1928-1940 only 13 women's magazines were published. There were two main factors for this decrease: firstly, the Latinization of the alphabet, which was one of the reforms of the new Turkish Republic, took place in 1928. The alphabet reform caused an obstacle for all publications at that time. Secondly and more importantly, it was believed that there was no longer any need for women's struggle for equality as women had been 'given' rights equal to those that men had in the public sphere, such as employment opportunities outside the home, the vote etc. Women's magazines remained limited in their number and variety for about fifty years. In this long period they appeared to deal predominantly with women's domestic responsibilities and fashion. Moreover they acted as a regulating authority over women's private lives as the images and the roles of women were almost entirely constructed in the context of the domestic sphere. There was no significant mass produced feminist or women's magazine which questioned women's rights and the role of women in a male dominated society until the early 1980s.⁴³

⁴³ For further information about this period's women's magazines, see Asli Davaz-Mardin, 'Cumhuriyet dönemi Yeni Harfli Kadın Süreli Yayinlari, 1928-1996', *Toplumsal Tarih*, March 1998, pp. 15-25.

***The Birth of the Mass Market:
The Implications of Changing Social and Economy Policies***

A turning point in the women's magazine market in Turkey occurred in the wake of the women's movement during the early 1980s.⁴⁴ This decade manifested different social, cultural and economic climates than previous decades (the socio-economic and political context of the 1980s has already been discussed in chapter one) and those evoked different responses in terms of the ownership, sales, titles and messages of women's magazines. The women's magazine industry, along with other consumer magazines, has flourished since then. The 1980s and 1990s marked changes both in the structure of the market and in the form and content of messages. In this period, women's magazines' definitions of femininity and the female role came to be treated as transformable.

Some traditional women's magazines, which focused on fashion, knitting, embroidery and cooking, still existed in the market but many women's magazines launched in this period tended to address the 'modern urban woman' as constructed in bourgeois liberal discourse. Some of the titles launched in the 1980s were *Kadın* (Woman), *Kadınca* (Womanly)⁴⁵, *Elele* (Hand in Hand), *Rapsodi*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vizon*. These magazines offered their readers information about 'new' female goals, for example,

⁴⁴ According to Asli Davaz-Mardin, 195 women's magazines/periodicals have been published since 1928 -in modern Turkish- (she includes not only commercial periodicals but also publications by different institutions, and these publications are concerned with any aspects of women and womanhood). She studies each decade and finds out that 44 new titles were introduced to the Turkish market between 1980-1990; and 63 new titles were introduced between 1990-1996. Davaz-Mardin, 1998, p.19-21.

⁴⁵ *Kadınca* was launched in December in 1979 but I find it more convenient to categorize it as one of the magazines launched in the 1980s.

health, employment, education, equal rights and so on, beside fashion and caring for home and children. One of the first and most influential women's magazines of the 1980s was *Kadınca*. As will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, *Kadınca* reported the feminist movement widely and became the leading voice of the movement. In a conventional sense, it was neither a typical women's glossy magazine, nor a feminist magazine, but both.

Almost all the titles launched up to the 1980s were indigenous. Both the number of local and foreign titles has increased over the last decade. These new titles, such as *Amica*, *Options*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Votre Beauté*, *Prima Donna* and so on, look more sophisticated, stylish, colourful and attractive than previous ones. These glossy magazines address the young, aged between 20-35, mostly employed, 'independent', dynamic and 'intellectual' urban woman who has gained a place for herself in society. Four new titles, *Biba*, *Amica*, *I.M.Donna* and *Options*, were introduced into the Turkish market between 1996-1997 and in a short time they came to control about a quarter of the women's magazines market. All these magazines can be categorized as career women's magazines. The nature of this development in the Turkish women's magazine market, and therefore in the audience, indicate that an increasing number of (urban) women have been using women's magazines as a means of getting information and opinions about social issues, femininity, and women's issues.

The five categories suggested for the contemporary British women's magazines can be applied to the Turkish magazines too: fashion and style oriented, housewife

magazines, career women's magazines, teenage magazines and feminist magazines. However, one other type of women's magazine appears to be unique to the Turkish context, namely Islamist women's magazines. Magazines in this category may seem to overlap with some of the others, but need to be categorized separately, because Islamic discourses heavily dominate the contents of the magazines. In opposition to the others, these magazines construct an essentialized role and identity of women within a context of Islam. Since their first appearance on the market in the mid-1980s they have been gradually expanding. Some of the titles are *Mektup* (Letter), *Kadin ve Aile* (Woman and Family), and *Kadin Kimligi* (Female Identity). Some of these magazines have already been discussed previously. These publications have played an important role in Islamist women's struggle to become visible and political.

Shaping and Reflecting the New Feminist Movement: Feminist Magazines

Feminist magazines in Turkey can be categorized into three sections: Socialist/radical feminist magazines, magazines published by Kurdish women, and the Islamist women's magazines, the only example for the last category is *Kadin Kimligi*. Although it may seem problematic to have the third category and to include *Kadin Kimligi* as one of the feminist magazines, in the context of Turkey this magazine adopts a radical discourse of Islam and criticizes male dominance within Islam and the capitalist system. It deals with women's issues and offers solutions to 'liberate' women albeit from within Islamic rules.

Currently there are only two magazines, which fit into the category of socialist/radical feminist magazines, *Eksik Etek* (1994) which generally appears once every two months but is sometimes published irregularly, and *Pazartesi* (1995) which is a monthly feminist magazine. *Pazartesi* is the only nationally distributed feminist magazine and according to the editor, Filiz Koçali, sells around 5,000 copies. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, the history of contemporary feminist magazines dates back to the late 1980s. *Feminist* and *Sosyalist Feminist Kaktüs* (Socialist Feminist Cactus) were the first independent magazines of the new feminist movement exclusively devoted to 'women's issues'. *Feminist* was first published on 8 March 1987 by the Women's Circle⁴⁶. Seven issues were published, the last being in March 1990. *Sosyalist Feminist Kaktüs*, which was launched in May 1988, emphasized its ideological distinctiveness from other feminist discourses, particularly from that of the *Feminist* magazine. Neither of them was distributed nationally, but feminist debates, which emerged in the 1980s, revolved around these two magazines. In addition to these well-established magazines, a few feminist magazines appeared irregularly for a short period in the market in the early 1990s, such as *Dolasean Mavi Çorap* (1993) and *Marti* (1994).

As feminist discourses began to diversify in the 1990s, the range of feminist publications and activities became broader. Kurdish feminist women became visible within feminist debates and in the political scene of Turkey. Their publications

⁴⁶ The Women's Circle was discussed in the previous chapter, in mapping Turkish feminist movement section. For further information see Sirin Tekeli, '80'lerde Türkiye'de Kadınların Kurtuluşu Haraketinin Gelisimi', in *Birikim*, No 3, July 1989, pp. 38-9.

include *Jiyan* (1991), *Ji Bo Rizgariya Jinan* (1993), *Sena* (1994), *Roza* (1996) and *Jutin* (1996). Currently only *Roza* and *Jutin* exist in the market.

Kadın Arastirmalari Dergisi (Women's Studies Journal) (1993) published by Istanbul University Women's Studies Department is the only regular academic women's publication. As will be examined below, the market share of all these feminist magazines among the large women's magazine market is quite low.

Women's Magazines Publishers and the Market in the 1990s

The women's magazine business is a growing market, evident from the circulation figures for the 1990s, which were the highest ever. Although it is very difficult to give the exact number of women's magazines, according to Davaz-Mardin's research, there are over 70 magazines in the Turkish market aimed at women in the late 1990s.⁴⁷ But it should be noted that she includes not only commercial women's magazines but also other magazines, bulletins, and newsletters aimed at women published by different institutions. If she had only included commercial women's magazines the number would drop to about 50.

Table 5 shows the top 15 best-selling women's monthly magazines by circulation. Although the population of Britain and Turkey is approximately the same (over 60 million), compared to Britain the circulation figures are quite low in Turkey. The

⁴⁷ Asli Davaz-Mardin, *Kadın Süreli Yayinlari Bibliografisi: 1928-1996, Hanımlar Alemi'nden Roza'ya*, (Istanbul: Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi & Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998).

main reasons for this difference can be explained by socio-economic, political and cultural factors: the expansion of the media industry, particularly the private media industry has been rather recent in Turkey; about fifty percent of the population lived in the rural areas until the beginning of the 1990s and now around sixty-five percent live in the urban areas; the illiteracy rate is higher compared to post-industrial countries; and there is a lack of high-technology in the publishing industry. Comparing the cover prices of the best selling women's magazines, they are relatively cheaper in Turkey than in Britain. The cover prices of the Turkish magazines vary from £0.80 to £1.50. This is not a surprising fact since the standard of living in Turkey is not as high as in Britain.

The global trend of media ownership into fewer and fewer hands is also evident among the Turkish women's magazine publishers. Although the women's magazines market has a relatively long history of financial success and high circulation in Britain, particularly since the inter-war years, it has only become a successful commercial business since the 1980s in Turkey. Like the British case, the structure of the women's magazine industry is highly concentrated. Through mergers and corporate takeovers, a few media companies have come to dominate the market. Milliyet, Hürriyet, Sabah (Bir Numara Yayıncılık) and Show Media Groups are the largest women's magazine publishers. Hürriyet and Milliyet, which own many of the other media sectors in Turkey, merged in late 1997 and formed Birlesik Yayıncılık and Dağıtım Yayıncılık Ltd. Smaller size women's magazines publishers include Intermedya and Interpress Yayıncılık.

Some of the better known titles published by large companies are:

Milliyet

Kim (career women)

Hey Girl (teenager mag.)

Votre Beauté (fashion and style)

Elite (fashion and style)

Sabah

Cosmopolitan (career women)

Viva (fashion and beauty)

H. Bazaar (fashion and beauty)

Vizyon (fashion and beauty)

Hürriyet

Marie Claire (career women)

Elele (fashion and style)

Klips (career women)

Fame (fashion and style)

To conclude, this brief examination shows how women's magazines as a social institution and economic phenomenon have responded to the changing demands and conditions of women. Women's magazines both adapted their discourses with these in mind, but also shaped and influenced their audiences' expectations of female identity. Being a source of social and commercial influence depends on their messages which have changed over time.

Although the focus of this study is the mid-1990s rather than comparing changes within women's magazines over time, the historical analysis of the market outlined in this chapter provides evidence that the market and the content of women's magazines have changed and adapted themselves to the economic and political changes and social movements in the twentieth century. What is the role of the editor in all this? This question points to a need to turn to the production of these texts and to examine who the people responsible for the production of these magazines actually are, and how decisions are made, in order to theorize about the strategies used in the popularising of feminism.

In this study, editors are seen as an integral part of the progressive representation of femininity and the expanding magazine market. Thus the approach of the magazines to feminism/femininity as well as commercial values cannot be fully explored without tackling them. This approach leads us to consider the relation feminism has with female journalists and editors who produce the magazines (and indeed with the girls and women who read them but as has been discussed earlier reception of the magazines is not part of the objectives of this study). In the light of this view, responsibilities and the role of the editors in the production process are discussed in the following section with reference to the interviews with the editors of the women's magazines in question.

EDITORS: WOMEN PRODUCING POPULAR CULTURAL TEXTS FOR WOMEN

Responsibilities of Editors in the Production Process

All the editors of the magazines examined in this study are women. This is not a new trend as women have been active in the magazine industry as publishers, editors, writers, and readers since its beginnings.⁴⁸ Throughout the years women have had top editorial positions in women's magazines. This distinguishes the women's magazine

⁴⁸ For example, in Turkey, one of the earliest women's magazines, *Kadınlar Dünyası*, as a rule, employed only women. As early as 1787 in America, letters from women were published in magazines, articles had feminine authors. One of the earliest great magazine editors was a woman, Sarah Josepha Hale, who founded *Ladies' Magazine* in 1828. Sammye Johnson, 'Magazines: Women's Employment and Status in the Magazine Industry', in *Women in Mass Communication* (Second Edition) (ed.) Pamela J. Creedon, (California: Sage, 1993), pp. 134-153, (p.134).

publication sector from other media sectors where women are rarely employed in top executive positions.

All the editors, who make the final decision for the output, are at the top level within the managerial structure. Linda Wood, managing editor of *Cosmopolitan*, defines her role as an editor as follows.

My role is to oversee all the different departments... I make sure that we get the magazine out on time and to budget... I have all the internal politics of the office... My main tasks would be to see all the copy we have commissioned and make sure that it is processed in the right way. I am very much involved in planning stages. When we have planning meetings to discuss the next issue we put a flat plan together... We work as a team and I coordinate between heads of the departments: chief editor, deputy editor, the art director, and fashion director. (Appendix A, p. i)

All the editors interviewed state that they have total control of running the magazine, hiring the staff, and making the final decision for the content. Editors' statements about their responsibilities suggest that both the Turkish and the British editors are equal in power to each other in terms of controlling the whole production process of the magazines. However, the variety of the departments in the British women's magazines illustrates the fact that *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* are produced by a more sophisticated and professional environment than *Kim* and *Kadinca*.

There is only one area the editors state where they do not have total control; that is, advertising and promotion. They say they try to influence buying pages for products to promote which are suitable for the readers, but it is the publisher who makes the final decision in this area. Sometimes, these complex power relations between

writers, editors and owners could cause a contradiction in the content of a women's magazine and its advertising policy. As the analysis of the 'Ege Seramik' advertisement in *Kim* illustrates (see the case study), this contradiction is explicit particularly in the Turkish magazines used in this study, (while there is a strong emphasis on feminist values in written texts, advertisements often depict women in their traditional roles and thus produce stereotypical and sexist images of women). Such contradictions should be understood against the background of the market economy of the women's magazine business.

For women's magazines, attracting more readers is indirectly profitable. Each additional sale does not increase the magazines' profit margin. Instead a magazine realizes its profit by selling advertisements and charging its advertisers a rate adjusted to its known circulation. *Kadınca* ceased publication in 1998; the main reason was that it did not attract enough advertisers to cover the cost of its publication anymore. There is a tendency among large media corporations in Turkey to set up their own advertising agencies in order to decrease the cost of advertising. They mostly broadcast or print the ads they produce as it is more profitable. These large corporations often subsidize most of their consumer magazines. Being part of a rather small publishing company *Kadınca* did not survive the highly competitive capitalist market rules. The closure of *Kadınca* will be discussed further in the last chapter.

Editors' Role in Producing Feminine/Feminist Culture Within and Against Dominant Ideology

The editors are all self-claimed feminists⁴⁹ who often express strong feelings about feminist issues, particularly the Turkish editors. The Turkish editors' personal histories and their relations and commitments to feminism show differences from the British editors. First of all, Asena and Kazancibasi have a recognized feminist identity within a large and diverse feminist circle in Turkey and also in the media. Moreover, Asena is a well-known public figure as a writer, a journalist, a feminist activist, and a women's magazine editor. Her influential first book, as mentioned earlier, *Kadının Adı Yok* came out in 1987 and earned bestseller status for a long time, not only in Turkey, but also in Greece. The book was seen as a quasi-autobiographical 'confession' with reported memories of sexual experiences, emotions, regrets and anger. It was recognized as Turkey's first feminist manifesto. The popularity of the book and its author evidently added to the popularity of *Kadınca*, for which Asena was then working as editor.

In her long career built up over the last twenty years, Asena expresses her concerns for women's magazines as follows:

...to teach women something about themselves and about the society we live in. My aim is to encourage them to think and question the things they confront in the patriarchal society that we live in. Along with the good bits and fun we report serious issues (such as gender inequality in all aspects of life).

(Appendix A, p.xiv)

⁴⁹ In an interview with the editors, they all gave their definition of feminism and claimed that they reflected their ideas in the women's magazines they worked.

When Kazancibasi talks about the tone of *Kadınca*, she expresses explicitly the responsibility she has for the reader, and the way she reflects her feminist ideas in the magazine:

...we suggest to women that they stand on their own feet, know their rights, get educated, work and get involved in democratic, non-governmental organizations, politics and so on... we encourage women to fight for their rights, to refuse to stay at home and do nothing. This is how women can control their lives. This aspect of the magazine is concerned with women's status in society. The other aspect is the personal lives of women, their emotions and feelings. We offer an identity for women who are confident, for example about their body and happy about themselves...

(Appendix A, p.viii)

She says that her understanding of feminism shapes the magazine content. Asena and Kazancibasi define feminism as 'women's struggle and fight for equal rights'. Neither of them wishes to identify themselves with any 'isms' or any particular strand of the feminist movement; nevertheless, they tend to view themselves as being close to liberal feminist thinking. On the other hand, British editors' perception of feminism positions them between liberal and postfeminist views. For Wood, a feminist is somebody who believes in equal rights for women and men: 'sexes are different but their rights should be equal'. Baker's definition of feminism overlaps with the current popular postfeminist debates which see it as a woman's right to choose. She says, 'loosely it is about giving women the right to have a choice' (Appendix, p. v). They both claim that they reflect these ideas in *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman*. However, as Baker says these ideas are implicit:

...maybe we feel rightly or wrongly that we don't need to write about feminism explicitly on a regular basis. I think our feminism is evident in it. Feminism is a weird word in this country, it is almost a dirty word. It's like "oh you hate men". (Appendix A, p.v)

Baker refers to research undertaken by a trade magazine on whether women's magazines' editors would define themselves as feminists. She makes the following comments:

few women would. Because we don't consider feminism as an outmoded concept, i.e. old fashioned, out of date. I don't think that feminism translates to men hating. Our reason for existing is to be pro-women, to celebrate women. I don't think we need to pretend to be *Spare Rib* or anything like that. We are trying to help women to make their lives better. (ibid.)

The way she thinks the magazine helps them is to write about their rights, their emotional existence, their work, their relationships. In Kazancibasi's view, the existence of *Kim* and *Kadınca* goes beyond such aims and acts to some extent as consciousness-raising sources for women:

They raise women's consciousness about social life and relationships as well as about their rights as women. We give such messages, for instance, that if you face domestic violence or sexual abuse you must not accept it as your destiny... It is not natural or normal to experience such things.

(Appendix A, p.ix)

All the editors interviewed identify women's financial independence as one of the significant social changes in the second half of the twentieth century. This is seen as a development that gives women equality, independence and freedom. Yet Baker points out that women, who work longer hours and have less security, are still paid less than men. Baker also identifies sexual and emotional changes that occurred in women's lives. They all believe that women's magazines have responded to these social changes. Kazancibasi makes it explicit and argues that 'the content of the magazine depends on the social changes that take place in society as well as the editor's view'. (Appendix A, p. xi) Both Asena and Kazancibasi emphasized how *Kadınca* responded

to the emergence of the feminist movement in Turkey and became a source for the movement in the 1980s. Regarding new issues, they said that they have introduced issues such as health, environment, sports, career, man and masculinity as well as current feminist politics as the new interest areas of women's magazines since the mid-1980s.

Backgrounds of the Editors: Prospect for a Better Future

When the age of the British magazines' editors is concerned they appear to be in the same age category as the magazines' target audience, between 25-35. The readership of *Kim* and *Kadınca*, however, varies from university students to middle age, but the majority of the readers are between 20-30. In this respect, the majority of the readers are younger than the Turkish editors who are in their early 40s. Considering the staff of the magazines as a whole, it is possible to draw a conclusion that they are of approximately similar ages to their target audience. This means that producers and readers of the magazines have relatively similar experiences, so the magazines can be seen to some extent as a tool for women, including producers and readers, to share their experiences and to exchange ideas about common interests and problems of young, middle-class, heterosexual women. Wood actually talks about how sometimes discussions of their own experiences at meetings can inspire the development of an agenda for the next issue.

All the editors have a background in journalism. When they leave their existing jobs they either wish to carry on as an editor and work for another magazine or work as a journalist. In fact, Asena, who left *Kim* in late 1998, is now working as the coordinator of all the consumer magazines published by the mother company. When *Kadınca* ceased publication in 1998, Kazancibasi moved to a private television channel, Show TV, and she has been working as a journalist since then. Asena and Kazancibasi have carried on their careers in the media sector, which is highly competitive and dominated by men, and in a rather stronger position than their previous jobs. Their career progression in the media business draws a positive picture on behalf of feminist politics in Turkey, for they believe in the fact that they will be able to merge their feminist consciousness into their present and future work.

In conclusion, the evolution of women's magazines traced in this chapter and the discussion of the role of editors in the production process set the historical perspective, the market and the production context for *Cosmopolitan*, *New Woman*, *Kim* and *Kadınca*. Studying women's magazines from these aspects provides a comprehensive understanding about the fragmentary and contradictory nature of the women's magazine as a popular cultural form. In the next section, the history of those magazines, which will be analysed in the case study, are discussed.

THE HISTORICAL SCENE OF *COSMOPOLITAN, NEW WOMAN, KIM AND KADINCA*

The magazines in question are all commercial women's magazines. Both their cover and inside pages visually exude consumerist hedonism, and the advertisements they carry are glossy advertisements. They follow traditionally established patterns of the women's magazine genre. For example, Deirdre McSharry -who resigned as editor of *Cosmopolitan* in 1985- in an interview in 1983 described the content patterns of *Cosmopolitan* as follows:

...one sex article and six emotional articles, and one a negative, one a positive article. It is like cooking if you like, it is a kind of recipe...the readers know a certain amount about what they are going to get. That's the sort of reassurance element...But the clever thing is to always offer a very strong element which will surprise them, and that's really what keeps them going'.⁵⁰

All magazine advertisements are often strategically placed in relation to editorial material, encouraging readers to notice them. Articles appear to have a common structure: First they set up a personal problem, then they explore it through a combination of knowledge from 'the experts', and finally they come up with numbered or labelled strategies of action. By offering advice on different matters, such as sexuality, cosmetics, employment etc., the image of women is constructed in the magazines as 'a person to be advised'. This structure of the articles is also observed for the editorials and advertisements. For example, when a busy career woman is constructed in an advertisement, a credit card or a digital file is offered as a vital component of her success.

⁵⁰ Janice Winship, *Inside Women's Magazines*, (London: Pandora, 1987), p. 100.

As illustrated above women's magazines show common characteristics in their contents, but they also try to establish their differences from their rivals. As will be discussed later, their styles and the contexts in which they deal with women's issues establish their particularities among a wide range of women's magazines. For this reason, it is useful to look briefly at the histories of the magazines in question in order to put them in a wider context for an in-depth analysis.

COSMOPOLITAN

Rubrics: features, careers, fashion, health and beauty, travel, living and food, competitions and offers, regulars. Occasionally slots entitled 'fiction' or 'offers' are included. *Cosmopolitan* has a page entitled 'Dear *Cosmopolitan*' which attempts to provide a space for its consumers' complaints as well as for their praises. It should be pointed out that the letters, which get published, go through a process of selection.

Cosmopolitan was launched in 1972 in Britain and became, as Braithwaite puts it, 'the biggest post-war success story in the magazine publishing industry in Britain'⁵¹. It is owned by one of the biggest magazine houses, National Magazines Co. Ltd., which owns six other popular magazines in Britain.⁵² It is the top-selling magazine among a female readership in Britain aged approximately between 20-35. According to the editor the majority of the readers are single and middle-class. *Cosmopolitan's* design has a different look to that of the other magazines. It offers more to read and

⁵¹ Brian Braithwaite, *Women's Magazines: The First 300 Years*, (London: Owen, 1995), p.112.

⁵² Braithwaite, 1995, p. 160-61.

its visuals, the way images are represented from fashion to cookery, invite the reader to think and comment on them.

There is not a strong editorial voice in *Cosmopolitan*. The editor usually discusses the contents, gives a few personal asides and makes some references to *Cosmopolitan* staffers and contributors. She does not express any opinion, except on special occasions, for example the employment of a new editor. Most articles are written by freelance writers therefore the opinions expressed in the rest of the magazine are not clearly *Cosmopolitan*'s. Thus, *Cosmopolitan* can be seen as a facilitator for bringing a range of individuals together and creating a space for them to 'speak out'. This aspect of *Cosmopolitan* produces its pluralistic discourse. The same characteristics can also be observed in *New Woman*. However, it should be remembered again that the articles selected for publication have to fit into the general publishing policies of the magazines in question.

Textual analysis of *Cosmopolitan* shows that there are contradictions in its approach to women's issues. As Winship argues, 'if there is a key to *Cosmopolitan*'s commercial success it is in embracing that contradiction to offer a pluralism of opinions, voicing what are potentially mutually exclusive views on the subject of women'.⁵³ It can be pro the women's movement and sometimes against it, in sympathy with men's problems or very critical of them. Marriage is sometimes endorsed and sometimes condemned. These disparate opinions are presented in

⁵³ Winship, 1987, p.102.

different styles that can be serious or funny but they present an awareness of women's problems.

In the early years when *Cosmopolitan* was launched it considered itself revolutionary: it acknowledged the challenges of being a woman in the 1960s, as well as celebrating femininity. It was one of the first magazines to meet a small, tightly defined audience with its launch in the early 1970s. '*Cosmopolitan* was daring, sexy, outspoken; it challenged the very core of traditional gender roles and led the way for all the other respected women's magazines'⁵⁴, this statement by the new editor, Norwood, summarizes the history and the significant role of *Cosmopolitan* over the years. The quotation below by her also shows *Cosmopolitan*'s response to the feminist politics of the 1970s and 1980s:

When it was launched in 1972, *Cosmopolitan* brought to an unsuspecting world, a unique message of sexual liberation. Early issues show that the liberation was all about sexual rather than economic...In the early 1980s, *Cosmopolitan* was fusing sex and politics and it was ahead of its time in confronting contraceptive issues. It was playing an important role in empowering women. It introduced a working section for women and their career. (*Cosmopolitan*, November 1995)

The previous editor of *Cosmopolitan*, Marcelle d'Argy Smith describes today's *Cosmopolitan* in her last editorial article as follows:

It is the magazine most firmly embedded in female consciousness, a glamorous package with a cheerful outlook and a sense of humour. Yet, it is the only magazine with a philosophy to encourage and support women in *all* their endeavours. Stay single, get married, live with a partner, have a child, choose not to have a child, have a demanding career, choose to work at a gentle pace - or any combination of these at different times in your life - as long as you are fulfilling your potential and leading the life you choose for yourself. If *Cosmopolitan* has become a legend, it is because

⁵⁴ *Cosmopolitan*, November, 1995, Editorial.

it reflects the personality and desires of its readers who are so special.⁵⁵

In her article, Smith equates the characteristics of the nineties women to the feminine qualities constructed in *Cosmopolitan*:

What makes the *Cosmo* woman special is what makes the Nineties woman special. She wants to know, to learn, to understand, to be better than she is...That sort of willingness and openness is a terrific thing and not to be done down...Friends, lovers, family, work, sex, fun - *Cosmo* deals what really matters. It's the stuff of all our lives. (September 1995)

Her last sentence, especially, 'Dear Reader, be all that you had hoped to be, live long and prosper. When in doubt, buy shoes', associates femininity with consumerism, a common construction of femininity in popular culture. After all, the magazine serves the capitalist marketplace. Like other magazines, it is a commodity and also a vehicle for advertisements, offering a wealth of consumer goods for readers to choose, and to buy. The construction of 'Cosmo woman' in *Cosmopolitan* reveals the fact that feminism is constructed as a commodity value within its consumer and popular discourses.

Cosmopolitan tries to persuade its readers that power is individual. It is more about 'I' than 'we'. It supports an ideology of competitiveness and individual success, for example, one of the rubrics is entitled 'Competitions & Offers'. The notion of women's empowerment has been inspired by feminist thought but it is used to encourage individual achievements in *Cosmopolitan*. Appropriation of feminist ideas in popular and commercial discourses provides evidence about how the phenomenon

⁵⁵ *Cosmopolitan*, September, 1995, p.8.

feminism has been redefined for the benefit of the capitalist system. Clearly, popularisation of feminism in this way is contrary to the 'sisterhood' ethos formulated by the women's liberation movement of the 1970s. This is a point which is discussed more fully later.

NEW WOMAN

Rubrics: Features, health and beauty, in the pink (your guide to feeling good), men, fashion, and in every issue (regulars). 'Men' is the only section *New Woman* has that *Cosmopolitan* does not. The section called 'in the pink' includes issues such as career, life and food, which are the equivalent of two sections in *Cosmopolitan*, careers and living and food. There are two sections in *Cosmopolitan*, competitions and offers and fiction that *New Woman* does not include.

New Woman, like *Cosmopolitan*, is imported from America and was launched in 1988 in Britain. *New Woman* was brought to Britain by Murdoch and was his first sole venture in the world of women's magazines. It is a joint British and foreign venture between Hachette/EMAP Magazines Ltd. and Murdoch Magazines. As Braithwaite points out it had started in the States as a *Cosmopolitan* look-alike but had been underfunded.⁵⁶ Encouraged by *Cosmopolitan*, 'the changes in women's attitudes inspired by feminism and the sexual revolution, and the large numbers of women entering the paid workforce, *New Woman* attempted to provide an alternative to the

⁵⁶ Braithwaite, 1995, p. 138.

traditional women's service magazines'⁵⁷, in the context of America then Britain. The editorial of the first issue defined the magazine and its reader as follows:

A New Woman is fun to be with, not a formidable challenge -someone who is softer, more feminine than the myth of superwoman. We have come a long way since we were force-fed the illusion of that finger-snapping, high-flying executive in her power suit pushing her way up the executive ladder while running the ideal home, perfect children and lover, fitting in aerobics classes on the side. No longer are we afraid to say that she was a figment of media's imagination and nothing to do with the real us - women married or single, who are daily balancing home, husband or lover, children, friends and jobs. Realistic enough to know that we can't have it all, but optimistic enough to give it our best shot. (August 1988)

It is interesting to note that the magazine acknowledges the media's role in creating myths for women and tries to challenge this view by representing and engaging itself with 'real' women and their lives. Both its features and the subjects covered emphasize that *New Woman* is strongly concerned with real women's lives, real problems as stated in its first issue. A feature, for example, entitled 'real-life couples' presents real couples to show how they overcome difficulties or how they cope with life and problems. Another feature entitled 'in person' also deals with real women and their rather uncommon social and emotional problems, such as 'orphaned at 29', 'two (lesbian) women's brave fight to be a family' and so on. The treatment and the nature of these issues parallel its statement: 'We are talking not *about* you, but *to* you'.

New Woman, as the editor describes, addresses women in the 25 to 35 age group who are probably in a relationship, probably don't have children but may be thinking about it, who have jobs and have a life outside the home. Some of the advertisements

⁵⁷ Ellen McCracken, *Decoding Women's Magazines: From Mademoiselle to Ms.*, (London: Macmillan, 1993), p. 216.

suggest that some of the readers have children or are thinking of having children. Its content also suggests that its readers are more mature than those of *Cosmopolitan*'s. As McCracken commented on the American version of *New Woman*, it often assumes a middle-of-the-road position on controversial issues, in effect 'playing it safe' while at the same time projecting an image of novelty and excitement.⁵⁸ This also applies, to a large extent, to its British version. In this way it differs from its rival *Cosmopolitan* which is more provocative, ironic and tends to deal more with controversial issues than *New Woman* does.

KADINCA

Rubrics: Regulars, pink pages, employment and women, interviews with celebrities, social life (features), sports, green pages (environment), fashion, places, shopping, beauty, career, sex, health, art and astrology. Like other women's magazines, *Kadinca* addresses women's concerns about relationships, sex, beauty, fashion. However, it also draws upon the discourses of social movements such as feminism and environmentalism. It deals with feminist issues in a slot entitled 'pink pages' and with environmental issues in another slot entitled 'environment'. *Kadinca*'s emphasis on certain issues such as sports, environment, employment and career are absent in *Kim*.

When the past eighteen years since *Kadinca* was launched are considered, four distinctive periods in its development emerge. Implementation of these changes in

⁵⁸ McCracken, 1993, p.218.

each period was too drastic and too abrupt, and had a bad effect on sales. First, it started as a traditional women's magazine addressed to urban housewives. The second period started in the same year, 1979, with the take over by Duygu Asena and her staff who came to be known later in the following decade as radical feminists. During this time the impact of feminism began to achieve some public legitimation, particularly through street demonstrations and petition campaigns which had characterized the 1980s. For example, the feminist street demonstration after the 1980 military coup was organized in 1987 in order to protest against domestic violence.⁵⁹ Many others followed this campaign regarding sex discrimination in Turkish law. All these feminist campaigns and protests were reflected widely in *Kadınca*. It became the leading voice of the feminist movement in the 1980s and played a significant role in disseminating feminist issues to a large number of people.

At the beginning of the 1990s when Asena and her staff left, *Kadınca* for a short period under a new management became a traditional beauty and fashion magazine. The reason for this change was that the publishing company changed hands and the previous staff left as they could not negotiate with the new owner in terms of continuing to publish the magazines within the same lines. Later, when Kazancibasi and her staff took over in 1993, another clear shift in its discourse was observed. Kazancibasi describes it in the period as a magazine which 'informs women about their rights, provides guidance about the issues of the women's movement, and helps women take care of their body and sexuality'. (Appendix A, p.xiii) Both *Kim* and

⁵⁹ For further information about feminist street demonstrations and protests began in the late 1980s, see Sirin Tekeli. 'Introduction: Women in Turkey in the 1980s' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society* (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, (London: Zed Books, 1995), pp. 1-21, (p.14-15).

Kadınca suggest that the way to improve your life is to foster independence and to fight stereotyped sex roles. Their feminist perspective exists along the line of the magazine's popular and commercial discourses, which, as will be discussed in detail later, produce contradictions within themselves.

According to Kazancibasi, *Kadınca* addresses middle and lower-middle class women over the age of 22; approximately 35% of them are employed, 10% are students and the rest are housewives. Some of the advertisements suggest that some of the readers do have children.

Kadınca was closed down in early 1998. According to the publishing company, the main reason for its closure was that the magazine no longer attracted enough advertisements to cover its cost. Most of the popular women's and consumer magazines are owned by large companies in Turkey but *Kadınca* was owned by a relatively small company which made it vulnerable in a highly competitive market. Large media companies subsidize some of their magazines as they can afford to do it. However, in the case of *Kadınca* the owner seemed to find it more profitable for the company to close the magazine down. This case shows to what extent the economic policies of the market determines what options will be available for people to read.

KIM

Rubrics: Editorial ('Identity'), interviews with celebrities, social life, fashion, beauty, sex life and regulars. There is a slot, similar to 'pink pages' in *Kadınca*, entitled 'witch like', which deals with issues such as women's legal rights, gender inequalities etc., usually ironically. There is only one different slot in *Kim* that *Kadınca* doesn't have: it is entitled 'a biased men's addition'. This section makes fun of men's physical appearance, sexuality and their intelligence. The irony and the style of language used here and elsewhere in the magazine distinguishes it from *Kadınca* (this will be discussed in detail in the following chapter). As is outlined above in the history of *Kadınca*, *Kim* can be seen, to a large extent, as an extension of *Kadınca*.

The editor of *Kim*, Duygu Asena, defines the readers of *Kim* as follows: they are middle class and decide to buy the magazine themselves, they earn money and stand independently (Appendix A, p.xiii). The age of the readership varies from university students to middle age, the majority of them are between 20 and 30. As Asena puts it, the *Kim* reader is young and single and is sensitive to issues concerning women, and wants to learn something about herself and about life. Asena's definition indicates that *Kim* addresses, like *Kadınca*, the 'modern woman' constructed in the bourgeois liberal discourse. This modern woman may appear in different ways, as a housewife, a student or an employed woman, but the stress is on the independent, successful, dynamic, intellectual woman. *Kim* describes itself in a special issue about the readership research as follows: '*Kim* follows closely what is happening around the

world regarding arts, politics and women's movements. *Kim* questions life, male and female relationships, masculinity and gender inequality in society. It is up-to date, radical, opposing, determined and always welcoming' (August, 1995).

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF POPULAR FEMINIST/FEMININE IMAGES IN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES IN THE 1990s

As was outlined in the introduction in this thesis, content analysis and comparative qualitative research methods are applied to examine constructions of femininity and articulations and representations of feminist images and messages. The themes that emerged from the analysis and the frequency of their appearance in 1995 are shown in Appendix C. The themes were often interrelated and interchangeable and the space devoted to discuss these themes varied in each magazine. Therefore enumeration of the content characteristics should be considered here as a basis for the analysis of cultural texts. Employing a qualitative approach permits a detailed examination of concepts, messages and meanings constructed in the magazines. The dominant themes are discussed below under six sub-headings through which I have identified some similarities and also some differences between the two countries. The main differences can be summarized as follows:

- The British magazines emphasize sexual difference and female individual pleasure whereas the Turkish magazines present sexuality as one of the territories dominated by male values from which women need to liberate themselves.
- While femininity is constructed in the British magazines by the way in which personal qualities of self-confidence, assertiveness and determination are emphasized, the tones and messages of the Turkish magazines differ in the sense that they encourage women to claim and recognize their own individuality, and to

refuse what other people expect them to do. These include, male-female relationships, education, work, arranged marriage or how to dress.

- All the magazines in question deal with the changing feelings of masculinity and the 'new man'. However, while *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* often give men the chance to speak for themselves, to discuss how they cope with their new identities in a serious manner, *Kim* and *Kadınca* define the 'new man' according to modern women's expectations and often make fun of men; their intelligence, sexuality, and physical appearance are parodied.
- Considering articulations and appropriations of feminism, the British magazines deal with feminist issues and themes covertly: feminist ideas and messages are spread throughout the magazines as important subtexts. On the other hand, the Turkish magazines engage with feminist discourses explicitly and devote slots to discuss feminist movements, gender inequalities, patriarchal institutions etc.
- Incorporation of feminist values into consumer discourses results in reducing feminist collective goals to individual choice and life styles in the British magazines. On the contrary, feminist social goals and its critique of unequal social, economic and political relations are represented as important issues to deal with by the Turkish women's magazines, emphasizing collective activism as well as individual improvement for a more democratic society.

I will now look at each theme to discuss the ways in which the women's magazines in question reappropriate and redefine feminism for their own purposes and in which ways they use feminist issues and values to redefine femininity in the 1990s.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'POSTFEMINIST' SEXUALITIES vs. THE SEARCH FOR SEXUAL FREEDOM

Sex has become one of the dominant themes in young women's magazines since the 1960s. As McRobbie points out 'more than ever before sex now fills the space of the magazines' pages'¹. It is true that for both the British and the Turkish magazines sex provides the framework for their existence. However, they show major differences in their representations of female sexuality. For example, while sex is represented as a source of individual pleasure for women who have freedom and choice for their sexual experiences in the British women's magazines, in the Turkish context where women still struggle to achieve a sexual revolution, female sexuality is often discussed in relation to patriarchal social and moral values.² Sex is portrayed as a terrain dominated by masculine values in the Turkish magazines, thus they tend to use a deductive language to encourage women to change their subordinate position brought about by sexual inequality.

As far as contemporary women's magazines in the West in general are concerned, there appears to be a tendency to construct women's sexuality in postfeminist terms. In other words, it is considered and emphasized as a terrain of self achievement and pleasure. Regarding sexuality, feminism has been interpreted by the magazines as having the freedom to choose one's sexuality. Contrary to the magazines of the 1950s and the 1960s women's sexuality is discussed from a feminist perspective. In those

¹ Angel McRobbie, 'More!: New Sexualities in Girl's and Women's Magazines', in *Cultural Studies and Communication*, (eds.) James Curran *et al.*, (London: Arnold, 1996), pp. 172-194, (p.177).

² Of course, in Turkey the Islamic approach to female sexuality forms an important aspect of patriarchal social and moral values.

days women's magazines began to break the taboo on sex but it was still then difficult to approach questions of female desire. As Cynthia White put it in the 1970s: '*She* (in the 1950s) deals frankly and humorously with topics formerly considered unmentionable in polite women's journals, e.g. it has unblushingly informed its readers exactly what a bidet is for'³.

Indeed the impact of feminism on the politics of women's magazines regarding heterosexual issues is significant for generating debates and providing information about female desire and sexual pleasure. They deal with issues that have been on the agenda of the feminist movements since the mid-1970s; they can even be seen as further ahead than feminists as early second wave straight feminists often tended to conduct discussions around the area of sexual violence, pornography and contraception and to block debates around female desire and sexual pleasure. However, as discussed in the introduction, some feminist theorists have become dissatisfied with such simplistic analytical premises and begun to examine the questions of pleasure, desire and difference.⁴ The magazines in question provide endless information about female sexual pleasure, sexual technique as a learning process, paying attention to sexual health and to equality in sexual relationships. Information about contraception and pregnancy tests are also provided, more in the British magazines, and they often appear in advertisement form.

³ Cynthia White, *Women's Magazines 1693-1968*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1977), p. 12.

⁴ For example, the work of Janice Radway and Ien Ang is significant in this field in terms of the articulation of female pleasure and feminist politics. Ien Ang, *Watching Dallas: Soap Opera and Melodramatic Imagination*, (London: Methuen, 1985); Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature*. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 1984).

Cosmopolitan led many other magazines in the 1970s in its attempt to open up a space for women to celebrate their sexual pleasure and individual freedom. Since then sex has become a significant aspect of women's magazines and thus the 'New Woman'. But, representing women's independence as synonymous with heterosexual sex and love, as Janet Lee argues, 'constructs the liberation of women in the interests of men's sexual desire'⁵. Her critical view of women's magazines still applies to 1990s' magazines to some extent regarding their very representations of heterosexuality as a norm and its close associations with power and independence as exemplified in *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman*. However, as will be discussed below, the magazines examined in this study seem to begin to move beyond male sexual desire and raise questions about a much discussed and controversial 1990's feminist issue of female sexual desire and pleasure.

Cosmopolitan and *New Woman* both define female sexuality as heterosexual and active. They have adopted a quasi-feminist discourse in which they urge women towards greater achievements. Being sexy and, as a result, feeling powerful are crucial characteristics that open the way for women towards these achievements, e.g., handling all interpersonal and work relations with self confidence. For instance, *Cosmopolitan* rearticulated its view of feminism in a special feature on 'Feminism Now': 'It's not about dungarees and hating men. Feminism is....Relevant. Positive. Powerful. Sexy. Strong'⁶. Its interpretation of feminism is, as Macdonald has

⁵ Janet Lee, 'Care to Join me in an Upwardly Mobile Tango', in *The Female Gaze: Women as Viewers of Popular Culture*, (eds.) Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment, (London: The Women's Press, 1988), p. 169.

⁶ *Cosmopolitan*, October, 1993.

commented, 'Struggle is *out*: sexiness and power are *in*'⁷. Being sexy, stylish and successful are the main characteristics of the 'Cosmo girl'. It insists that every woman can and will achieve the aim, which is to be a Cosmo girl, and offers information on how to have it all: to be sexy, successful and liberated. Most articles on sex, such as 'Happy, Healthy Sex' (November 1995, p.129) make direct links between freedom/independence and being sexy/self-confident. The fact that these magazines give sexual attractiveness and its achievement a high priority raises an important question to address: whether they do it from a male point of view or female point of view and for whom. Acceptance of heterosexuality as the norm by the magazines, and thus by the readers, reinforces the argument that they are concerned with what makes a woman attractive and sexy for, almost exclusively, the opposite sex.

Nevertheless, feminist thinking on sex filters into the pages of *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* in a way that emphasizes self-reliance. As the producers of the magazines state, representations of sexuality might indicate a challenge to traditional patriarchal view of femininity. Despite this optimism, it would be difficult to argue that they actually aim to change the established patriarchal values and offer a new set of values to replace them. For example, sex is seen as fun in *Cosmopolitan* instead of as a way of challenging existing sex roles: 'All you want to do is have some fun...so why won't the world accept a woman who won't commit?' (November, 1995, p.153). Similar feature articles on sex in *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* illustrate that these magazines have taken the explicit step of divorcing sex from love and 'meaningful'

⁷ Myra Macdonald, *Representing Women: Myths of Femininity in Popular Media*, (London, Edward Arnold, 1995), p. 172.

relationships. This shift not only emphasizes that the previous discourse of 'how to keep your man in love with you' has been replaced by another discourse of 'how to be good in bed' or 'how to enjoy your sex life', but also implies that women's magazines have redefined women's sexuality in the 1990s. Yet redefinition of women's sexuality in this way only extends the limits of women's sexual practices within the patriarchal system.

The only feminine sexuality covered in the Turkish magazines, like their British counterparts, is heterosexual relationships. However, their tone differs in the sense that while the emphasis is on individual pleasure and enjoyment in the British magazines, without any social or moral value attached to it, as it is perceived as an individual choice, the Turkish magazines represent a view that women struggle to achieve sexual revolution. There is a general belief as stated by *Kim* that Turkish women never achieved sexual revolution. The British magazines discuss and emphasize sexual difference rather than inequality whereas sexuality is portrayed by the Turkish magazines as a terrain dominated by masculine values from which women need to liberate themselves. Several articles both in *Kim* and *Kadınca* urge the need to educate women about sex and their sexuality. They argue that women's sexuality is controlled by men and male dominated institutions. Women are encouraged to stand against the dominant male values and to take action to change their subordinate position produced through sexual inequality as well as other inequalities in social life. A feature article entitled 'Women are guilty in all positions! We should realize this and fight against it' in *Kim* sums up their views:

Women are found guilty in all cases. We should realize this and fight

against it: We were told when we were kids that we are the second sex. Our sexuality is controlled by men. In literature, in art or religion there is a good woman image and there is a bad woman image. Women have been internalising these images throughout the years... Women should get together and stand against these images and prejudices.

November, 1995, p.99.

Attitudes of *Kim* and *Kadınca* on sexuality represent a view which is very much in line with feminist ideology⁸. In her analysis of *Kadınca* in the late 1980s, Ayse Saktanber⁹ observes that sexuality is espoused by *Kadınca* as a normal and valuable part of women's identity and that women must get to know their own sexuality and acknowledge it as part of their very existence. The present *Kadınca* and *Kim* still persist with the same attitude to women's sexuality and also stress female sexual pleasure. Sexuality is seen as something which must be spoken about and as an expression of one's inner self.

They both have a section called 'sex life' within which questions such as how to improve one's sex life, pregnancy and contraception are addressed; sexuality is promoted and praised, provocative questionnaires, expert support from medical doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists are offered. These articles often coincide with advertisements for cosmetics that have been produced for women's bodies. This controversial representation of feminine sexuality could be read as a reflection of femininity defined by patriarchy. Asena points out that these two aspects of the magazine may be seen as contradictory. Nonetheless, she argues that 'being an

⁸ Feminist ideology is used as a body of ideas which describes the sexism of any particular society and suggests ways of eradicating sexist contradictions for future society.

⁹ Ayse Saktanber, 'Women in the Media in Turkey: The Free, Available Woman or the Good Wife and Selfless Mother?' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli, (London: Zed Books, 1995), pp. 153-69, (p. 159).

independent individual and trying to be beautiful and caring about your body cannot be separated, they are both equally important for women' (Appendix A). Asena attempts to present a view which concerns women as a whole in terms of physical and social body. Yet she does not seem to acknowledge the fact that a woman's body is turned into a marketable entity through these advertisements which give tips to women on how to become attractive for men and on what a man would expect a woman to be. These tips also help women on how to compete with other women for men.

Sex and sexual issues are often approached by sexologists and feminists in women's magazines. This separation is clear in the Turkish magazines. Health experts offer sexologically inspired advice on sexual technique, for example, 'Key to super orgasm: Biological attraction' (p.94-96) or 'Learn how to use your love muscle for stronger orgasm' (p.98-99), (*Kadınca*, September 1995). Their feminist approach identifies problems and offers solutions to emotional and interpersonal difficulties. 'Agony aunts', in particular, and some features deal with these issues, for example, 'Love vs. Sex: Battle in the Bedroom' (*Kim*, June 1995, p.115). This article points to the common belief about gender differences that men think 'physical' and women feel 'emotional' but it negates this belief. The article provides some medical research results, according to which more men than women express their desires and/or motivations for having sex. Scientific explanation of this fact, sex hormones, is not seen as a satisfactory reason for the differences between male and female sexual attitudes, instead the writer emphasizes that the contrasting sexual behaviours of male

and female are learned and that social factors play a more significant role in determining men's and women's attitudes towards sex. This argument overlaps with some feminist arguments in cultural studies that like other social identities, sexual identities are also socially constructed.

Virginity is treated as a sub-theme both in the British and the Turkish magazines. However, the contexts in which it is dealt with are different. It is represented as a social and legal problem in Turkey. Some incidents and statistics are given in order to emphasize the seriousness of this problem. Some of the headings under which this issue is discussed are:

University students discussed: Double standard in sex life. If their girl friends are virgins they sleep with other women. "We live with a dilemma: we love someone but experience sex with other women or prostitutes".

Kim, February 1995 (p.62-65)

The last hope of a woman who lost her virginity. How can virginity be restored?

Kadınca, August 1995 (p.88-90)

The unchanged view of the state: If you are a virgin you are moral and virtuous, if not you are immoral.

Kim, Mart, 1995 (p.28-29)

"The first time I had sex". This is the story of one woman's desperate mission to find somebody man enough to lose her virginity.

Cosmopolitan, May 1995 (p.95)

As the last quotation from *Cosmopolitan* suggests virginity is seen as something to get rid of to become an adult. In this and other articles about virginity, social and moral values are never raised as a problem. Unlike in Turkish magazines, it is seen as a personal not a social issue.

Virginity tests became an important public issue in Turkey in 1995 as some government institutions such as the police, education institutions, student halls' directors as well as some families, mainly in the eastern part of the country, forced girls to have virginity tests. Some of the cases were so dramatic that the girls committed suicide. This issue has been taken seriously by all sectors of the media, and by the women's magazines in question in particular. They criticized and responded to the state policies for controlling women's bodies, and their view is supportive of the 'victimized' girls. In particular, *Kim* criticized the subordination of women by the state and argued that 'virginity tests requested by parents, police, headmasters are not legal; on the contrary, they are against our constitution, human rights and international law' (March, 1995, p.29). Its view is often stated in a sarcastic manner, for example one of the headlines read 'An IQ test should be given for those who impose a virginity test'. The tone of the Turkish magazines can be interpreted as radical in an Islamic context where sex is still perceived as a taboo by most of the society, and virginity is a 'must' before marriage.

It is assumed from their feature articles that the readers (mostly single) of *Kim* and *Kadınca* will have sexual relationships.¹⁰ Yet their strong emphasis on the need for female sexual liberation and the content of the letters written by the readers in the

¹⁰ When the personal lives of the editors of *Kim* and *Kadınca* are considered, it is possible to draw a parallel between the experiences of the editors and the discourse of the magazines. Duygu Asena, the editor of *Kim*, never got married and always argued in her public speeches and writings for female sexual liberation. Esra Kazancibasi, the editor of *Kadınca*, lived seven years with her partner, and stayed married for three years, then got divorced four years ago. (See Appendix A) Their personal experiences can be seen in the Turkish context as a challenge to the established norms of patriarchy and Islamic culture. Yet it should be pointed out that cohabitation has gained a relative acceptance in the big cities in the 1990s.

letters column suggest that actually their assumed (single) readers might not have sexual relationships but are encouraged to do so as it is seen as an integral part of women's liberation. Usually six short letters, written by the age group 16-23, are published in each issue of *Kim* and are predominantly concerned with heterosexual/emotional relationships, disappointments, split ups etc. However, there is no reference to sex and sexual problems in these letters. On the other hand, the marital status of the readers and the subjects of the letters differ in *Kadınca*. About half of the letters are written by married women, and sexuality is discussed along with other problems of heterosexual/emotional relationships. *Kadınca* stopped running an agony column in June 1995 and *Kim* never had one during the course of 1995. By comparison, their British counterparts both have an agony column where there are wide-ranging discussions on the subjects of sex and orgasm. Readers' letters are also concerned with relationships and occasionally with identity problems and lack of confidence.

Both the British and the Turkish women's magazines in the year examined, recognize to a limited extent those whose sexuality or sexual practices transgress the norms of heterosexual relationships, whether lesbians, gays or bisexuals. The British magazines also recognize their existence by including lesbian and gay advice centres or help-line information boxes. In the issues examined, there was only one article in *Cosmopolitan* about lesbians which is concerned with lesbian clubs and their culture in Los Angeles (January 1995, p.82-85). Provocative photographs of lesbians in these clubs in outrageous outfits accompany the article. In addition to this, there is an

announcement in the April issue which asks the readers to call in or write in order to express their opinions about the rights or wrongs of lesbian parenting (1995, p.80). This issue is covered by *New Woman* in the same year which tells a story of how a lesbian couple won a court case to be the parents of a child. This real-life story criticizes the prejudices held against lesbianism and lesbian lifestyles (June 1995, p.69). The coverage of lesbianism points to the fact that, as Winship notices, 'when an article about lesbianism appears, it is addressed, somewhat voyeuristically, to heterosexual women and expresses and urges a liberal tolerance rather than a feminist understanding'¹¹. The content of these articles suggest that lesbianism is not dealt with as an integral part of discussions of women's sexuality. The liberal view of the magazines for lesbianism is that women should be able to adopt a lesbian identity if they 'choose'. Yet the magazines do not tend to question what 'sexual identity' means, either lesbian or heterosexual.

While there is no mention of lesbianism in the Turkish magazines, there are a few articles on male homosexuality. While gay sexuality is not discussed as part of men's sexuality in *Kim*, *Kadınca* attempts to look at homosexuality from different aspects. In a feature article entitled 'I want to have the responsibility to lead gays in Turkey' (November 1995, p.68-69) a well known gay poet, Küçük Iskender, is interviewed. He is asked questions about his homosexual identity, certain problems that gay people face, his views on feminism and lesbianism, his future literary work which is related to sexuality. Homosexuality is represented rather as a social issue and problem in the

¹¹ Janice Winship, *Inside Women's Magazines*, (London: Pandora, 1987), p.117.

Turkish magazines which suggests that the existence of homosexuals should be accepted by mainstream heterosexual culture. By representing homosexuality in this way the Turkish magazines contradict themselves because women's magazines, including *Kim* and *Kadınca*, accept heterosexuality as a norm and all other sexualities are seen as 'abnormal'. Sexual minorities, in particular gays, transvestites and bisexuals, are given a space to speak out about their own sexuality in the first-person confessional feature. Devoting this limited space to these erotic confessional accounts of sexual experiences can be interpreted as holding a 'liberal' position since they acknowledge difference and tolerate it for its 'interesting' value.

The exclusion of lesbianism in the Turkish magazines can be explained by the perception of lesbianism by Turkish feminists in general. Lesbianism as an issue has never been on the feminist agenda until recently and thus never seen as part of the feminist struggle. One of the differences between Turkish and British/Western feminisms is based on their sexual liberation discourses. Ömer Çaha argues that while in Western literature the term 'emancipation' means liberating women from male domination in the private and public spheres, Turkish feminists, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter, often associate 'emancipation' with sexual liberation from male domination over women's bodies.¹² This difference stems from the distinct historical experience of Turkish women. It goes back to the Ottoman period when the public and the private spheres were separated sharply and women's lives were confined to the private sphere through assigning them sexual values

¹² For further discussion see Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın: Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum ve Kadın*, (Ankara: Vadi yayinlari, 1996), p. 208-9.

compatible with Islamic culture and the male ruling class. In other words, through strict controls over women's sexuality women had been kept away from the 'male body' for centuries, and the well-known harem lifestyle of the Ottomans represents the institutionalised aspect of this segregation.

As a result of this historical experience, what sexual freedom means to Turkish feminists is to bring the male body, which was traditionally kept away for a long time, and women together as well as fighting against male domination in other aspects of social life. One of the main differences between Western and Turkish feminists can be identified as follows: lesbianism was/is perceived as a way of becoming independent of men which has worked as a means of providing an alternative model to male/female relationships. The term has become politicised in the Western context which aimed to 'attack both the institution and the ideology of heterosexuality as being the centre of patriarchy'¹³. A slogan, 'feminism is the theory, lesbianism is the practice' was used in the 1970s in the West to affirm that lesbianism was the radical political practice and experience of the feminist movement, whereas most feminists in Turkey have tended to reject lesbian relations and tried to foster the process of being closer to men physically and psychologically to explore their sexuality. Thus, in Turkey the feminists groups' claim for sexual freedom was/is concerned with their desire to experience equal and free sexual relationships with men. Lesbianism never gained ground to present itself as an alternative to heterosexuality. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, gradually it has become an issue on the feminist

¹³ Maggie Humm, *The Dictionary of Feminist Theory*, (Second Edition) (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1995), p.149.

agenda since the late 1990s in Turkey. Some articles in recent feminist magazines appear to criticize earlier attitudes of feminist discourses for neglecting and being silent about lesbian issues.

Along with both the British and the Turkish magazines' obsessive attention to heterosexuality, relatively minimal attention is given to other relationships: friendships between women, familial relations, work friendships. Thus, their approach to homosexuality implies that a 'normal' female and feminine sexuality is socially constructed as heterosexual. One significant reason for not covering gay and lesbian issues could be related to the composition of the readership, which is predominantly white, middle-class and heterosexual. Apart from one feature article, they do not cover other minority issues either, for example, being a black woman or a black lesbian.

To conclude, the construction of contemporary femininity in the women's magazines examined in this study is predominantly defined through sexuality and in relation to men. This provides a frame for female identity. In this identity formation, fashion and beautification are promoted as significant contributors to visual images of female sexuality. It appears that there are two important points concerning the way in which they are represented. Firstly, women openly enjoy the labour of body-work which involves maintaining a beautiful and healthy body; and secondly, it is implied that women do this for themselves rather than men. Through representations of the female

body for commercial purposes - e.g. in beauty and fashion advertisements - the magazines heighten the visual pleasure of looking at the female body.

The visual codes used in these magazines pose a question as to whether these codes might foreground the possibility of a lesbian visual pleasure. From a lesbian point of view, decoding of such visual codes is based on, as Reina Lewis puts it, 'a recognition that the fundamental contradiction of female magazine consumption - in which women are tutored in looking at, admiring and identifying with other women's bodies - is a potentially eroticised experience for all women readers, not just lesbians'¹⁴. Similarly, McRobbie argues that female looks in women's magazines offer pleasure for heterosexual and lesbian women but points out that the female looks 'are not those of desire but they are about enjoyment'¹⁵. According to her, lesbian desire is carefully and studiously avoided. As McRobbie states, 'there is pleasure in those femininities constructed as beautiful and there is also anxiety. Commercial magazines cannot resolve these anxieties nor can they confront what lesbian desire would mean visually in the mainstream of the magazines' fashion and beauty pages' (ibid.). Perhaps popular women's magazines would not confront lesbian desires but occasionally some advertisements' visual codes suggest lesbian connotations. An example of these advertisements is provided in Appendix B.

¹⁴ Reina Lewis, 'Looking Good: The Lesbian Gaze and Fashion Imagery', *Feminist Review*, No: 55, (Spring 1997), 92-109, (p. 94).

¹⁵ McRobbie, 1996, p.189.

THE 1990s' WOMAN: BEING SELF-CONFIDENT AND SELF-DETERMINED

One of the dominant themes stressed in the magazines is self-confidence, trusting yourself, and self-determination. Speaking to women intimately and individually, the magazines in question offer readers solutions as well as hope and sometimes escape. They give advice on how to overcome one's material, physical, psychological and emotional problems. They suggest that self-determination is important and that it is feasible for readers to control their lives much more. It is implied that if women make enough effort they are capable of helping themselves.

The image of the 'new woman' for the 1990s is constructed in the British magazines by the way in which personal qualities of self-confidence, assertiveness and determination are emphasized. This 'new woman' wishes to have a career, to be successful, to be attractive and sexy. The 'Cosmo Girl' is a good example of this 'new woman' image constructed by *Cosmopolitan*. In short, femininity is about success in both career and personal life in the magazines. It seems that the myth of the 1980s superwoman has been softened for the 1990s British woman. The 'new woman' constructed by the British magazines is not expected to have the traditional domestic responsibilities ascribed to women by the patriarchal system.

For the British magazines, especially for *Cosmopolitan*, self-confidence is mostly associated with outlook and being sexually attractive. One of the articles in *Cosmopolitan* entitled 'Self-confidence' is illustrative of this approach:

Is that you in the mirror? Leave behind your old self-image and see yourself for what you really are. For some women, the memory of past unattractiveness generates a profound sense of insecurity that can affect their relationships and work. (April 1995, p.38-40)

It emphasizes the notion of self-image and female attractiveness which are produced by consumer discourses and the beauty myth. In the meantime, *Cosmopolitan* supports women's belief in themselves, their own power to question and change their environment.

The following feature articles by *Cosmopolitan* provide further examples for the ways in which feminist discourses have been incorporated into popular and commercial discourses. One of them is entitled 'Trust your instincts' (August 1995, p.98-100); it generates positive feelings about womanhood and says: 'You have got a problem you don't know which way to go. Instead of looking to others for advice, try to have faith in your own intuition. Wonderful things happen when you believe in yourself'. Another feature entitled 'How I found inner strength' (October 1995, p.133-6) stresses female strength and success: 'B. Valley searched inside herself for the power to turn her life around and ended up creating the Women's Environmental Network, one of the most influential pressure groups of the decade.' Emphasizing personal growth, personal satisfaction and self-empowerment represents a tendency toward personalization of feminist discourses. Therefore, the way in which the concept of

feminism is used by the British magazines personalizes feminism and redefines its values in their own lines, as this appears to be the most useful way that fits into their own ideologies and market concerns. Consequently, they predominantly express an increase in personal knowledge and self-esteem to help to change women's lives for the better. Yet there is no connotation of common problems or issues that different women might share, such as maternity rights, and thus there is no prospect to initiate a collective activism to change patriarchal culture.

Female personal qualities of self-confidence and determination are also emphasized by the Turkish magazines; however, their tones and messages differ from their British counterparts. The regular editorial articles of *Kim* and *Kadınca* always encourage the readers to have free choice rather than fated determinism and suggest that only those who try hard can achieve. There are some feature articles which also deal with these issues under the headings of, for example, 'You should trust yourself. Be confident' (*Kim*, May 1995, p.134). The Turkish magazines suggest that women should be confident, take risks, be more active in their public and private lives, learn how to say no and so on. For example, an article in *Kadınca* (August 1995, p.56-7) entitled 'I wish I could say no!' explains that women usually try to please other people rather than themselves: 'If women learned how to say no they would be happier'. It encourages women to recognize and claim their own individuality, to respect themselves as individuals and do whatever they wish to do rather than what other people expect them to do. These articles imply Turkish women's lack of confidence

and thus try to build up confidence in almost all areas of their lives including their body and sexuality.

Sexual relationships before marriage are not acceptable and therefore most women are inexperienced and often feel guilty. The Turkish magazines address this issue and offer advice to women on how to be self-confident and enjoy their sexuality. For example, a feature article in *Kim* entitled 'I am confident and I feel good with my partner in bed' (July 1995, p.120-2) makes the following points: 'When you are making love don't think about your cellulite or don't hesitate to do what you enjoy with your partner. If you are confident, if you accept who you are in bed you will have a happy, satisfying relationship and sex life'. Such articles in the Turkish magazines aim to empower 'individual' woman and focus on the possibilities for individuals to change their lives and conditions for the better, including their psyches. Their emphasis on the individual could be compared with early 'pragmatic' liberal feminists in the West. They speak to 'individual woman' in 'personal' tones and give examples of the personal and practical experiences of 'real' women. The language of the magazines and their personal and political approaches to women's issues will be discussed in depth later. The above examples show that the Turkish women's magazines partly contribute to the consciousness raising process which began in the 1980s by the feminist groups' initiatives.

A number of lists are provided in the Turkish magazines about how to be a liberated and an independent modern woman. While the emphasis is on the 'new woman' in

the British magazines, the Turkish magazines, and Turkish people in general, are obsessed with the term modern. To label something modern is very important as it connects Turkey and Turkish people to the Western world. The reason lies behind the ideology of the modernization process imposed on people since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. The reader learns through reading these lists what to do, how to behave and what sense to make of her feminine identity, and thus how to become a modern woman. These lists contain ideas that can be considered as counter-discourses to the ideologies of patriarchy and Islam in the Turkish context as they encourage women to get rid of their virginity or to get their economic independence. These ideas have, of course, come from the impact of feminist politics. Emphasizing such issues in the magazines indicates that the magazines assume a type of woman reader who has benefited or wants to benefit from the achievements of contemporary feminist movements and who, as a result, is more aware of sexual and gender inequality than most women. However, this 1990s' modern Turkish woman image is expected to be good at everything, both in the public sphere and the domestic sphere, similar to the concept of superwoman created in the West in the 1980s. While women are strongly encouraged to take a more active role in the public sphere, readings of the subtexts sometimes emphasize their responsibilities for maintaining family and emotional relationships.

Consequently, traditional notions of femininity, and thus domestic issues, take a fairly low profile in *Cosmopolitan*, *New Woman*, *Kadınca* and *Kim*. Food and home decoration are covered in the way that express 'personal style'. No space is devoted to

domesticity in *Kadınca* in terms of food and home decoration; however, advertisements for domestic goods appear to be more frequent than the other magazines.

The magazines in question emphasize differences between men and women and encourage women to value and enjoy these differences. Femininity is celebrated in their suggestions of how to negotiate gender relations. Negative characteristics associated with femininity are sometimes reassigned positive meanings and are used for individual improvements. For example, being vulnerable is associated with femininity in *Cosmopolitan* which deals with this issue as follows: 'Trust us...It's good to feel vulnerable. It brings us great insight and the opportunity to think, understand and make changes to our lives that leave us feeling stronger' (November 1995, p.148-150). Historically women's magazines have always celebrated and promoted female values in their own ways and at different levels. A re-evaluation of the feminine identity and traditional feminine attributes has become significant in the theories of gender since the late 1970s. With the arrival of the cultural feminist movement in the West, which grew out of radical feminism, the emphasis began to be placed on the positive value of feminine qualities. According to Alice Echols, cultural feminism:

was a countercultural movement aimed at reversing the cultural valuation of the male and the devaluation of the female. In the terminology of today,... cultural feminists were generally essentialists who sought to celebrate femaleness....and organise women around the principle of female difference.¹⁶

¹⁶ Alice Echols (1989, pp. 6-7) quoted in Tania Lienert, 'On Who is Calling Radical Feminists "Cultural Feminists" and Other Historical Sleights of Hand', (eds.) Diane Bell & Renate Klein, *Radically Speaking: Feminism Reclaimed* (London: Zed Books, 1996) 155-168, (p.157).

With this new approach to femininity some feminists started to undertake a number of research projects, especially in the field of women as consumers and the media. This development in feminist theory and research perhaps made feminists scholars less critical of women's magazines and some other women's genres as they attempt to merge two discourses, femininity and feminism, to construct female identity.

While the magazines attempt to celebrate female qualities, some qualities attributed to men are degraded. Men are presented as desirable but at the same time threatening, unsatisfying, unfaithful and so on. It is interesting to note that being unfaithful is not seen as only a man's characteristic. There are occasional articles discussing women betraying their partners as well as men betraying their partners which seem to suggest the act of betrayal as a way of female empowerment. A feature in *New Woman* (April 1995, p.48-50) entitled 'Would you cheat' suggests that people change, situations change, so women might change their ideas about cheating. It makes an important point about female sexuality; by suggesting that it is also possible for women to cheat, the magazine attempts to challenge the commonly accepted values attributed to (passive) female sexuality that not only men but also women can cheat. Three women express their opinions on the subject who had sexual experiences with other men during their marriage and never regretted it. The Turkish magazines in the sample tend to question why men are unfaithful and criticize common acceptance of men's sexual freedom as opposed to women's passive and subordinated sexuality. Given this inequality in society *Kim* tries to reverse gender roles and justify the cases, however rare, where women are unfaithful to their partners. This particular issue

points to a shift in women's magazine discourses from promoting how to get and keep a man to emphasizing women's sexual pleasure and desire which is not bounded by a single man. By challenging traditional views of femininity, the magazines in question offer more liberated female subjectivities for the 1990s' woman.

Analysis of the magazines in question supports the idea that women's magazines are about being a woman and the problems of a being woman. Although the media texts address an imaginary, specifically defined target audience, the women's magazines examined in this study seem to acknowledge that there is no single state of womanhood. There are two main factors for the recognition of 'difference' between women. Firstly, the niche marketing techniques have acknowledged women as a heterogeneous group in order to extend the market for different types of womanhood. The market strategies allow ways of dealing with conflicting and contradictory views of female identities within the same text, for instance, in the same issue of a women's magazine. The second factor is the characteristics of the young female professionals who produce the magazines.

The women producers in the market not only have high educational qualifications but they grew up in the context of the 1970s and 1980s feminist debates. The result is that they tend to possess an awareness of sexual and gender politics which are pro-women. But this does not necessarily mean that they are consistent or always agree about all issues concerning women. They oftentimes contradict themselves in their examination of feminist issues. Instead, as McRobbie observes about women's

magazines, 'what can be seen is the coexistence of a series of different, sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory, female subjectivities'¹⁷. Thus constructions of heterogeneous femininities in the sample of women's magazines examined here can be strongly related to the recognition of diverse female subjectivities by the producers of the magazines. Of course, the role of their readers cannot be overlooked in this matter. For example, the old and serious language of sexual prescriptions would be rejected by the young women's magazine readers of the 1990s. They are being replaced by, as McRobbie points out, 'a more open-ended, less judgmental world of femininities' (ibid.).

A NEW PHENOMENON: THE COVERING OF MASCULINITY AND MALE IDENTITY

Women's magazines have been traditionally considered to be a women's genre. However, women's magazines, though not as much as soap operas, have changed in their attempts to attract a less specifically female dominated audience. The magazines claim that approximately ten - fifteen per cent of their readers are men.¹⁸ *Kadınca* and *Kim* differ from their British counterparts in their manner of attracting male readers. They have occasionally used male models on their cover pages and this is identified by the editors of the magazines as one of the changes they introduced in the early 1990s. Kazancibasi defends this strategy in the way that they didn't want to give a false impression that *Kadınca* was against men, and that feminists were men haters.

¹⁷ McRobbie, 1996, p.189.

¹⁸ See, for example, market research results undertaken by *Kim* in 1995.

She points out that women's problems concern both women and men and therefore they must look for solutions together. (Appendix A, p. vi).

Kim used a male model on its cover page in two issues in 1995. Although there was none in any issue of 1995, *Kadınca* used a male image on the cover page in the December issue of 1996, but this time a half naked male model. Its caption read 'Now male models pose naked'. The reader of women's magazines in Turkish for the first time ever found several naked male models in *Kadınca*.

Cosmopolitan did the pioneering work in the field of publishing nude male models in Britain in its July edition, 1996. Readers' comments on features published two months later in the slot entitled 'Dear Cosmo' show that it had received positive responses from its readers (at least some of its readers) and furthermore it had been congratulated on publishing nude male images. One of the readers expresses her feelings and says:

'I haven't bought *Cosmo* in years, but when I heard about the delights on offer in the July issue, I couldn't resist!..You should consider making this a regular feature as it would certainly ensure my future custom. Women in the 1990s want to have their sexuality taken seriously and our needs and desires to be met, just as men do'.¹⁹

Representations of nude male models and such comments on them signify firstly, *Cosmopolitan* is trying to understand female desire, and secondly, there is a potential among the magazine readership who demands that her magazine meets her needs and desires. This recent development observed in the women's magazines requires further

¹⁹ *Cosmopolitan*, September 1996, p.12.

discussion about the gaze. In her influential essay 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema',²⁰ Laura Mulvey is concerned with how cinema produces and reproduces the male gaze. Mulvey draws on Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis to examine the construction of women in cinema as spectacle, the gender of the gaze and voyeuristic pleasure. She separates the pleasure of the gaze into two distinct positions: men look and women exhibit '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' - both playing to and signifying male desire.

Depiction of the man as 'the sexual object of the gaze' can be seen as revolutionary for women's magazines. Because in view of the tradition of the patriarchal culture, as Lisbet van Zoonen says, 'a core element of western patriarchal culture is the display of the woman as spectacle to be looked at, subjected to the gaze of the (male) audience',²¹ Pornography, the most obvious genre, advertising, fashion, some television programmes, and Hollywood cinema have built on the exhibition of women's bodies as objects of desire and fantasy. The long-standing tradition of constructing women as a spectacle for the male gaze has been a common feature of popular as well as high culture. However, the growing appeal of popular cultural forms which explore the male body such as advertising, films, soap operas, women's magazines, and male striptease shows, suggests a shift in the sexual object of the gaze. This means that the issues of heterosexual female voyeurism have come to the fore. It may seem that *to-be-looked-at-ness* is not any longer the fate of women. Yet it

²⁰ Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3, Autumn 1975, pp. 6-18.

²¹ Liesbet van Zoonen, *Feminist Media Studies*, (London: Sage, 1994), p.87.

raises a crucial question to address about the possibility and pleasures of the female look and the construction of male bodies as objects of voyeuristic pleasure.

Both Mulvey and Mary Ann Doane²², who has taken Mulvey's point further to account for the male gaze, argue that within current patriarchal culture a reversal of the structure of looking is out of the question. While Mulvey and Doane explain why it is that men look at women, although in different manners, their psychoanalytic framework excludes the possibility of the female look, unless, they claim, the female gaze can only be a masochistic adaptation of the male spectator position. Their point here is not unproblematic as it provides inadequate theorization of the male spectator position but it is beyond the scope of the analysis to discuss it further.

John Berger in his book *Ways of Seeing* (1972) examines the possibility of women looking at men through their own eyes and makes the following points:

Men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object - and most particularly an object of vision: a sight.²³

The studies discussed above allow for restricted possibilities of the female gaze. However, I would argue that young women, the so-called 'post-feminist' generation in the 1990s seems to accept female desire without problematizing it much, as one of *Cosmopolitan's* reader expressed above. New representations of masculinity for

²² Mary Ann Doane discusses her ideas in detail in her article 'Film and the masquerade; theorizing the female spectator', *Screen*, 23(3-4), 1982, pp. 41-58.

²³ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. (London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1972), p. 47.

female readership can be seen as an effect of postmodern discourses, which aim to blur all hierarchies and traditional dichotomies, such as object/subject or masculine/feminine in society. As my analysis of the four magazines in this study illustrates female desire and pleasure are not repressed as much as they used to be.

The current situation in contemporary culture raises another question as to whether this is another way of imposing male norms on women: men have the pleasure of the gaze, so women must have as well. It would be too simplistic to argue that men are pushing women into male stereotypes and re-making women in the image of men. It would also deny female desire totally. Instead, I would argue that as female desire or lack of desire used to be defined by the dominant language in male terms since the ancient Greeks, when for example, representations of erect penises were used 'as tokens of good luck, as scarecrows or as guards to their estates'²⁴, masculinity has come to be defined as strong, active, in possession of the gaze. I would argue that the Greek male perceived his body as a god, therefore powerful, and because of his narcissism he displayed his body for his own pleasure without worrying if other people would like it or not. This attitude of displaying the male body is also the case in contemporary culture as opposed to the representation of the female body, which is displayed to be liked by men and other women, and therefore lacks narcissism. As Berger points out women see themselves through the eyes of men, from their point of view.

²⁴ Zoonen, 1994, p.97.

Despite patriarchal inhibitions against constructing the male body as object of desire, since the second half of this century some popular cultural forms have, however, provided possibilities for women to look at men. The most obvious ones are the erotic pictures and posters of rock stars, melodrama and soap operas. For example, in an analysis of a number of melodramas from the 1950s, J. Byars concludes that the way the camera is used and point of view structures enable a 'positive and unabashed expression of female desire'²⁵. More recently, examples can be found in sports photography, male pin-ups, advertising and soft-porn magazines for women (*Playgirl*). Nevertheless, in these cases, the representation of the male body is prevented from submitting itself totally to the control of the gaze, either of the (homosexual) man or the woman. A number of studies undertaken in the 1980s demonstrate the patriarchal limits for visualizing the male body for female pleasure.²⁶ These limits are drawn in various ways. For example, concerning male pin-ups, which show some parallels with the representation of nude male models in the women's magazines examined in this study, as Richard Dyer (1982) observes, the visualization of male pin-ups differs from the female pin-up in some crucial ways. Accordingly, if a man looks directly into the camera, the meaning of his look is far removed from the inviting smiles of female pin-ups. He claims 'the male pin-up, even at his most benign, still stares at the viewer'²⁷. The male models in *Kim*'s man's section, male nude models in *Kadinca* and *Cosmopolitan* show similarities with Dyer's observation

²⁵ J. Byars, *All That Hollywood Allows: Re-reading Gender in 1950s Melodrama*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p.178.

²⁶ See for example, Ien Ang, 'Mannen op zicht. Marges van het vrouwelijk voyeurisme', *Tijdschrift voor Vrouwenstudies* (Journal of Women's Studies), 4(3), 1983, pp. 418-35; Richard Dyer, 'Don't look now', *Screen*, 23(4), 1982, pp. 61-74; Antony Easthope, *What a Man's Gotta Do: The Masculine Myth in Popular Culture*, (London: Paladin Books, 1986).

²⁷ Dyer, 1982, p.66.

about male pin-ups. The male model is in a position of seeing and being-seen. It is possible to draw an analogy between the way Christian Metz defines the film in relation to the gaze, 'the film is exhibitionist, and at the same time it is not', and the way the male body is represented for female pleasure. Metz writes,

...there are several kinds of exhibitionism, and correspondingly several kinds of voyeurism, several possible ways of deploying the scopic drive, not all of which are equally reconciled to the fact of their own existence, but which attain in varying degrees to a relaxed, socially acceptable practice of the perversion.²⁸

Indeed voyeurism is not only one-dimensional and fixed, there are several kinds of voyeurism. In the case of the representation of the male body, while the man denies he is being looked at, he knows that someone is watching him, ambiguity continues. Freud's notions of fetishism and disavowal operate here. By his direct return of the look, the gap between being the voyeur and the object of the voyeur never closes. Consequently, the 'active' look of the man disturbs the voyeurism of the female spectator and so helps perpetuate the traditional balance of power in the visual representation of men and women.

In addition to the penetrating stares of the nude male models, they sometimes have a friendly smile on their faces as if the reader knows them intimately. This very representation of the male body, to some extent, denies the sexual qualities of the naked man which is achieved through aesthetic composition and lighting. Furthermore, presenting them with their first and last name, and providing some information about their background signifies that the naked male body is represented

²⁸ Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p.93.

as a *full* person, not just a body. In her research on *Playgirl*, Ien Ang²⁹ observes similar representations of the male body for the female gaze. She notes an ultimate difference between *Playgirl* and *Playboy* pornography which is achieved through the techniques mentioned above which construct the *Playgirl* man as a romantic object rather than a sexual one. It makes it possible to draw a conclusion that the objectification of the male body is in no way comparable to the objectification of the female body.

These kinds of representations of the male body do not seem to satisfy female desires as much as the female body satisfies male desires. However, the magazines' attempt to present the male body for female pleasures can be seen as providing one dimension of voyeurism within the male dominated culture which should not be overlooked as it offers a means to enhance female pleasure. 'Erotic' photographs of men can be seen potentially positive in their implications, as B. Martin points,

first, in terms of proliferating the range of representations and practices available; second, in terms of understanding these representations and practices as challenging binary models of sex and sexuality; third, as a means of subverting dominant cultural forms and establishing new discourses, representations and identities.³⁰

The important question to be addressed here is whether the editors perceive it as a way of destroying hierarchies in gender representations by simply reversing the gaze. In other words, whether their approach is short-sighted, in that it is seen as

²⁹ Ang, 1983.

³⁰ Cited in Ann Brooks, *Postfeminisms: Feminism, Cultural Theory and Cultural Forms*, (London: Routledge, 1997), p.199.

equalization, or whether it is seen as provocative, and therefore a step forward for challenging women's subordinate position and male control over the female body.

The women's magazines' intention examined in this study can be interpreted, to a large extent, as supportive of the second argument. For example, the text in *Kadınca*, which accompanies the nude male models starts with the following statement: 'it is also our right to enjoy the eroticism of the naked male body' (December, 1996, p.34). It points to the fact that women have been used as sexual objects by the media and popular culture and men have just watched this happily. The writer questions whether women want to see erotic picture of men, or conversely, women cannot enjoy looking at the naked male body. She does not give clear answers but says that advertisers must have realized this particular female desire as they have started to use eroticism of the male body in ads. It is assumed by the writer that female readers will enjoy looking at male bodies. The writer says: 'Don't worry if you can't get hold of foreign magazines, handsome and brave Turkish men also give nude poses' (ibid.). Representation of the male body for female pleasure, whatever the editor's intention might be, is significant for two reasons: firstly, construction of women as 'subjects' which has been one of the important objectives of second wave feminism, and secondly, recognition of male sexuality as a commodity product by advertisers which allows men and women to be positioned both as objectified/objectifying signs of sexual desires. It might not represent most realities of contemporary culture but, as Zoonen notes, 'images of women and men in popular culture are increasingly hard to interpret in traditional object/subject-active/passive-masculine/feminine dichotomies; a promising prospect

for female voyeuristic pleasure'³¹. Indeed with respect to the women's magazines in question, their effort to open a space for female voyeuristic pleasure could be seen as a means of subverting the dominant representations of gender and sexuality, as B. Martin points out above, and establishing new discourses, representations and identities.

There is a tendency in all magazines to deal with changing feelings of masculinity; however, the magazines differ in their approach and language. *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* often give men the chance to speak for themselves, for instance, about their emotional relations, about their sexualities, about their changing masculine values, i.e. having more responsibilities in domestic duties or being dependent on their wives financially. They also give men's views about women and feminism. In *Cosmopolitan*, for example, occasionally a male writer appears sympathetic to feminism, and grasps the problems of masculinity, like Joseph O'Connor. In a feature article he deals with the identity crisis the 'New Man' faces. He suggests that the women's movement has empowered women but made men confused about what they are. He explains how men feel about this situation.

We tried to be New Man. This is what women wanted we were told. But it didn't work... because women are always, always several evolutionary steps ahead of us. Thus, just when we got to the point when we were fully paid-up members of the New Men Club, women went and decided they didn't want that anymore...women decided the New Man was just the same old creature dressed in modern threads. The New Man was merely another way for men to be weak and vacillating and generally useless, and now women wanted men - if they wanted them at all- to be strong and sure and built like the Chippendales.³²

³¹ Zoonen, 1994, p.103.

³² Joseph O'Connor, 'Out of their depth: Why do men feel so insecure?' *Cosmopolitan*, October 1995, p. 16-17.

The writer deals with the transformation of masculinity by attempting to break the conventional codes of 'real manhood' and points to men's effort to reconstruct their masculinity in line with the women's liberation movement. However, he concludes that 'it may not be a man's world any more but some things never change.' Perhaps he refers to some changes in male structured society for the benefit of women but implies that male qualities and the nature of manhood never change. So the underlying message might be: the dominant role of men in society will remain despite some changes occurring in the patriarchal structure of society.

Kim and *New Woman* have a special section where they discuss masculinity and male identity though they are quite distinct in their styles from their British counterparts. For example, *Kim* devotes approximately fifteen pages to this section using sarcastic language. *Kim* makes fun of men, their intelligence, sexuality, physical appearance, and in general, patriarchal values. Men are not taken seriously and stereotypical masculine characteristics are often parodied. Men are portrayed in a way that women have been portrayed by men in the media for decades. There is a male model on the cover page of this section with the caption 'This month's beauty' (for an example see Appendix B); it is represented in a way as if the male gaze has been replaced by the female gaze. This can be seen as an attempt to reverse gender representation by using irony. Role reversal confirms *Kim*, to some extent, as a popular women's magazine which challenges stereotypical representations of women and men.

The quality of the paper used for this section is cheaper than the rest of the magazine pages, and this contributes to its messages which aim to degrade men and masculinity. It suggests what a 'real' man looks like: rough and rugged. The degree of *Kim*'s sarcasm towards men is stronger than the other magazines. Asena explains why they have this unique approach: 'In the past when we were publishing *Kadınca* we took everything seriously and attacked men. Then the discourse of *Kadınca* was aggressive and daring in a rather reactionary sense. What I mean is that, in the 1980s we called men "pigs" and argued that "men do not know how to make love, how to please women" and so on' (Appendix A, p. xiv). Asena assumes that men have learned something about themselves and about women in the last ten years through the changes achieved by feminist activists and she claims 'that's why we make fun of the things including men we used to take seriously'. According to Asena, they have more experience in the field³³ and could be braver in their approach to gender issues.

Kim also deals with the transformation of masculinity and informs its readers about what the 'New Man' is like, what types of men are 'in' and 'out'. *Kim* interviewed several men and women about the concept of 'New Man', and following their opinions, they categorized men known to the public as *in* and *out* (1995 April, p.52-5). The tone of the article is clear in the sense that it gives clues to men about what modern women expect a man to be like in the 1990s.

³³ What Asena means here is that in the field of women's magazine publication, they are better equipped to address gender issues. As it is discussed in the beginning of this chapter, Asena worked as the editor of *Kadınca* for several years before she set up *Kim*.

New Woman devotes approximately five-six pages to its regular men's section entitled 'Men: How the other half thinks'. Male models are used on the first page where the main topic is introduced. Its language is not as ironic as *Kim*, and feature articles are written and interviews are conducted by male contributors. Men talk on behalf of manhood to explain transformation of masculine values, their feelings and negotiations with these changes. Their views on women and relationships reveal the current situation that the 'New Man' experiences in Britain. For example, in a feature entitled 'The truth about living with women' five men talk about how they find or do not find a middle ground to live with women and to cope with daily life: 'We continue to argue about who does what -washing, cooking, cleaning- even who holds the remote control' (September 1995, p.130-2). It also gives enough space to discuss traditional masculine values critically. It is usually done smoothly by addressing the question 'why men won't admit ...'. Instead of degrading and humiliating masculine values, as *Kim* does, it tries to open up a space for the 'New Man' to discuss and question his masculinity and his relationships with women. Consequently, women's magazines can be seen as a place which not only provides a ground for women to define and re-define femininity, discuss transformation of feminine attributes, and construct an identity for the individual reader as a gendered and sexual being but it also, to a lesser extent, provides a space for men to discuss the same issues.

‘NEW’ APPROACHES TO FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

According to Ballaster *et al.* who analysed a range of women’s magazines published in Britain, most women’s magazines are concerned with personal and emotional relationships, primarily with partners, but also with children, family and friends.³⁴ Nonetheless, the glossies analysed in this study devote considerable space to discussing personal, emotional and sexual relations and there is almost no reference to women’s family life. Bearing in mind that the majority of the readers the magazines address are single, thus they promote qualities of being young, free, independent and single. However, the single state is seen as a temporary condition since they constantly inform, advise or encourage women to develop and/or maintain healthy personal relationships. Thus this ambiguity is never resolved. A survey carried out by *New Woman* supports the readers’ intentions in this matter. More than 75% of its readers see themselves married in 20 years time (*New Woman*, November 1995, p.62-6). Therefore, problems stemming from combining career, being a mother and wife have not often been discussed, especially in the British magazines.

There are some articles in the Turkish magazines, for example, a feature article in *Kadınca* deals with dilemmas working mothers have and readers are strongly encouraged to continue their careers after having given birth. *Kim* discusses these issues in two feature articles in a critical and analytical way from a feminist perspective. The first article entitled ‘Women according to men: Saints and whores’

³⁴ Ros Ballaster *et al.*, *Women’s Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Women’s Magazine*, (London: Routledge, 1991), p.137.

argues that ‘Men tend to separate women as bad and good. The good image represents a wife and a motherly, soft, reliable woman. The bad image represents a woman who is independent, free, of active sexuality and therefore threatening’ (*Kim*, November 1995, p.70-2). In another article entitled ‘New Woman, the Woman of the Future: Self-confident and Natural’, (August 1995, p.54-7), *Kim* reports a survey carried out in Europe about the position of women in contemporary society. There are subtitles in the article like ‘Women accepted that there is no perfect woman’, ‘The traditional housewife is dead’, ‘Yes to motherhood and no to marriage’ and the writer, Hülya Yildirim, adds her comments about Turkish women: ‘Turkish women have more problems than European women, because they still believe in the myth of superwoman that was created ten years ago in Europe. Turkish women are trying to be the best at everything in their lives, as a mother, wife and employee and they don’t get enough support from their husbands.’ As this article illustrates, women’s lives in Turkey are changing slowly compared to Western women, bearing in mind that the women’s movement started about ten years later in Turkey than in the West. Major areas of change can be observed in women’s place in the labour force and public sphere. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the number of women in Turkey who have entered the work force and paid employment has been increasing recently. Thus it is rather new for Turkish women to exist in the public sphere as an individual. As a result of this very fact, women are encouraged to combine their work outside the home and their domestic work.

The Turkish magazines have contradictory views in their approach to marriage. They are often critical of the family institution in which women are considered to be suppressed and abused. There are articles whose tone can be read as a feminist slogan which discourage the reader from getting married. On the other hand, there are articles which offer marriage to women as a way of releasing themselves from social and family pressures. The magazines acknowledge the traditional cultural norms in society as the main causes of women's subordination but ironically they offer solutions within the existing patriarchal culture instead of seeking to construct new structures from a female point of view. This can be partly explained by the status of family institutions in Turkey: despite the radical economic and social changes Turkey has gone through, family ties are still strong and cohabitation is not accepted by many sections of society; thus, marriage is almost the only acceptable way for male-female sexual relationships. According to the magazines women cannot act as an independent individual in a family circle as they are controlled by other family members. So among different views, marriage is also seen as a 'safe' way to claim an individual identity.

The family has been a very important and sensitive issue for Turkish politicians. The Turkish government has reduced, to some extent, the legitimacy of domestic patriarchy: 'directly through family legislation, and indirectly, through the inclusion of women in the definition of full "citizenship"'³⁵. However, the feminist struggle to change family law over the last decade provides an indication that the government

³⁵ Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Patterns of Patriarchy: Notes for an Analysis of Male Dominance in Turkish Society' in *Women in Modern Turkish Society*, (ed.) Sirin Tekeli (London: Zed Books, 1995), pp. 306-318 (p.308).

still continues to legitimate domestic patriarchy. For instance, despite the effort made by feminists to change family law in line with the CEDAW³⁶ agreement that the Turkish government signed in 1985 necessary amendments have not yet been made in the family law and the man is still recognized by law as the ‘head’ of the family. It can be considered ‘radical’ in the Turkish context to suggest changes in these institutions in favour of women. During the last ten years some feminists who have been attacking these institutions have been labelled as ‘radical feminists’ such as Duygu Asena. For example, her first book³⁷ created an ongoing debate in public and later it was banned by the government. According to Asena her book was considered to be unsafe for children because of its message. The main message for women was, as she puts it, ‘if you are not happy, run away’, meaning run away from your family and/or husband, in other words from male domination. (Appendix A, p. xvii) Although the women’s movement has created an awareness of and desire for more equal and democratic gender relations in society, Asena’s message is still criticized by the authorities and a number of ordinary people. This is only one of the many examples in Turkey, which illustrates that a woman’s identity is defined through her relation with her family or her husband, and therefore a woman is recognized as somebody’s daughter or somebody’s wife. As a result she is not by and large perceived as an independent individual in society.

³⁶ CEDAW (The convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women): It is a convention prepared by the international women’s network Women Living Under Muslim Law in 1980.

³⁷ Duygu Asena, *Kadının Adı Yok* (47th Edition), (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayın A.S., 1994).

The British magazines' approach to marriage is sceptical and critical. They present a mixture of articles, some of which offer alternatives to traditional man-centred lifestyles. One of the feature articles in *Cosmopolitan* deals with the marriage patterns of Hollywood stars and another one is critical of the government policy on marriage and family: "Should the state govern your love life?" The phrase 'living in sin' seems so outdated today, so why does our government continue to promote the idea that only marriage can save society?' (*Cosmopolitan*, May, 1995 p.31-2). This is one of a few serious questions posed by *Cosmopolitan* which rejects patriarchal values imposed on women through its institutions. In one of the features, *New Woman* questions marriage: 'Is marriage dead or is it just feeling unwell?' (November 1995, p.62-6). In another feature, it is critical of the roles women are expected to have in society.

"Which one is your personal nightmare?" Marriage and babies. Isn't that what little girls are made for. Well, for some women, just the thought of it can give them panic attacks...Society still leads many to believe that being a wife and mother is their primary role. But just as we're all expected to do it efficiently, so we all have fears about it. (*New Woman*, February 1995, p.60)

Feminist subtexts can be read in these articles as being critical of the family and marriage institutions which are considered to be the norms of patriarchal culture. Although such articles in the British magazines do not offer any specific solutions, they do question the legitimacy of male power in the domestic sphere and offer a way to challenge the existing power structures. They are significant in terms of opening up a space to discuss these issues publicly and of offering alternatives to traditional man-centred lifestyles.

Apart from *Cosmopolitan*, the magazines briefly discuss the responsibilities and problems of having a baby. Each magazine, although rarely, addresses the relationship between mothers and daughters. Often conflicts between them are emphasized. Of all the magazines, only *Kadinca* deals with fatherhood. There are two articles entitled: 'How does fatherhood affect marriage and men?' (May 1995, p.68-72), and 'An unusual father-daughter relationship' (February 1995, p.64-6).

Women's health-care issues have made it into the pages of almost all contemporary women's magazines. The magazines examined in this study also deal with these issues. Some of the major topics covered are menopause, contraception, gender bias in medical research, women and heart disease, women and breast cancer, women and health insurance. Providing information about women's health-care helps women to become confident and conscious about their body. Inclusion of such issues in commercial women's magazines show one of the various ways how feminist ideas have filtered into the pages of magazines in this area.

REFLECTIONS OF FEMINIST VALUES IN THE FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER

Issues related to employment and career are discussed in all magazines in the sample except *Kim*. Content analysis shows that the presence of this theme is approximately the same in the magazines but it should be noted that *Cosmopolitan* and *Kadinca* have special slots for this theme whereas *New Woman* does not. As a result the space devoted to this theme is less in *New Woman* than the others. There is a similarity

between the three magazines: they all introduce successful career women and deal with the difficulties and problems women face in the workplace. However, it is by and large represented as part of being a woman and only occasionally related to the discussion of discrimination and inequality in *Cosmopolitan*. On the other hand, *New Woman* and *Kadınca* explicitly emphasized that these patterns could be fought and changed. These positive images of women re-presented in the magazines are significant in terms of showing what women can do, to act as role models to empower women in their sense of themselves.

Kadınca has two regular slots entitled 'Employed Women's Corner' and 'Career'. The former one usually consists of two pages. Leyla Alaton, a well-known business woman and a member of a well known business family in Turkey, writes regularly on the 'Employed Women's Corner' page. Alaton explains the aim of her page as follows: 'To invite the readers to have a voice in the business world, to earn their own money and to develop and express the strength they have inside and also to encourage women to set up their own business' (February 1995, p.30). Alaton sometimes introduces a specific subject: for example, it could be about a book concerning women and employment, or a conference she has attended recently or the situation of women in workplaces in Turkey and so on. Readers' letters and her replies to them follow her introduction. Its style looks very much like an agony page except that the subject matter is concerned with women's employment. The types of questions and the backgrounds of the readers are varied. Letters are written variously, by a Turkish business woman living in France, a student who is trying to make a decision about her

future career, a girl who wants to work but is trapped between her family and her fiancée, a retired woman who is seeking an extra income and many other women who are seeking help and advice. The letters include a variety of questions such as how she can make use of her foreign language; how she can sell her paintings; or how she can get permission to become a representative agency for a foreign company. The questions deal with practical aspects of business or employment that one could easily get information about from employment or career agencies in Western countries but is less easy to do in Turkey. This is because there is no well-organized state or private network or help-line in this field, as with many other areas. Therefore, *Kadınca* becomes a useful source or guide for those women who need help in these matters.

There are two sub-themes in the career section in *Kadınca*; the first one deals with practical issues/problems at work and offers advice, i.e. how to cope with your colleagues, how to say yes or no to your boss, how to manage your money, how to improve yourself in your career, how to write a CV and so on. The second one introduces women who have already been successful in their careers. Considerable space is devoted to the award run by *Kadınca* to choose the most successful women of the year in Turkey in different professions. *Kadınca* identifies the candidates and readers choose the 'best' among them. There are women MPs and activists of the women's movement among the candidates. Tansu Çiller (she was then the Prime Minister) was chosen as the most successful woman politician in Turkey (November 1995, p.52-5). Representations of these issues can be seen as an attempt to make

women realize that there are a number of successful women working in different areas. Thus it encourages them to take an active role in the workplace and politics.

By offering women advice and help in becoming active in the public sphere and economically independent, *Kadınca* is fulfilling its task (set by the staff themselves as expressed by the editor) by supporting feminist ideas and values. *Kadınca*'s pro-feminist views in this area are explicit. Most of the issues raised are directly related to gender inequalities and gender discrimination. Sexual abuse at work is discussed and detailed information about what sexual abuse could mean is provided. For example, a feature entitled 'Don't keep quiet, fight if you are sexually abused by your boss!' (March 1995, p.76) openly deals with this sensitive subject. By discussing these issues, it tries to raise consciousness and urges women about the fact that more women now take part in the labour force and many of them face sexual abuse as well as discrimination. It encourages women to speak out if they face sexual abuse and discrimination. From this point of view it could be argued that *Kadınca* plays an important role in terms of enlightening women on how to cope with this new environment which used to belong to men.

Cosmopolitan has a regular slot devoted to this theme entitled 'Cosmo Careers'. As it is understood from its monthly column, the key word for *Cosmopolitan* in paid work is 'career'. Its implied readers are educated, middle-class professionals and thus have careers. It promotes the idea of motivated and energetic women. *Cosmopolitan*'s career section contains a variety of women's occupations from engineering to the new

glamour jobs and introduces some career women, usually in uncommon fields such as a surfer, a solo percussionist, a judo champion, a hunter and so on.

The concepts of assertiveness and self-confidence are emphasized as central to success. *Cosmopolitan* devotes space to work training, changing jobs, how to handle problems at the office, how to manage your time etc. Training programmes are suggested as a way to deal with problems at work. *Cosmopolitan* offers the readers its own (non-profit-making) training days as well as providing information about other training events. The message given in this section can be summarized as: be self-assertive, compete and be successful. Women are encouraged to aspire and are congratulated on winning. *Cosmopolitan* praises readers, for example, who write the best letter. By drawing attention to the importance of competing, *Cosmopolitan* attempts to blur a set of stereotypes in which ‘femininity’ and ‘masculinity’ are formulated in Western and most non-Western countries, including Turkey. According to these perceived gender stereotypes, as Coppock *et al.* explain,

“masculinity” becomes associated and defined in terms of aggression, dominance and power while “femininity” is defined in terms of passivity, submission and self-sacrifice. Boys and men are socialised into the stereotype of competitive, adventurous, self-confident, ambitious males whereas girls and women are socialised into dependent, passive, subjective, non-competitive, under confident females.³⁸

Traditional female roles and gender stereotypes are constantly being challenged by contemporary feminists, and now it seems that commercial and popular discourses are adopting feminist ideas for a better market strategy. *Cosmopolitan*’s attitude towards

³⁸ Vicki Coppock, Deena Haydon and Ingrid Richter, *The Illusions of ‘Post-feminism’: New Women, Old Myths*, (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995), p. 19.

altering and mixing gender divisions can be seen as an attempt to re-construct and redefine an 'ideal' image of the 1990s' woman.

The connection between having a successful career and consumption is apparent in *Cosmopolitan*. After having pointed out in an article that the number of women in high management positions has increased, it suggests that these women should get an American Express Charge Card and adds that there is a special offer for women (August 1995, p.68-9). A digital personal organizer is also suggested to those busy, successful career women. If we add the illustrations of young models, well-groomed and trim in executive fashion appearing as typical career women, the link between consumption and career becomes more obvious. On the one hand, it shows empowerment of women because women usually have had to ask men to do purchasing or ask men's permission to buy something as they have had limited economic power. On the other hand, it shows the ways in which feminist messages are commodified to attract women to be better consumers.

Referring to a recent survey, *New Woman* deals with the subject briefly and informs women about inequalities at work and how to claim their rights. It also points out that judgements about a woman's ability to do a job are still made on the basis of her looks. In the years studied, there is only one article in *Cosmopolitan* concerning sexual harassment at work in which Manchester Institute research results are provided (April 1995, p.102). Discrimination against women in the workplace is rarely discussed in *Cosmopolitan*. This issue is related to its promotion of the idea of

‘competition’ in *Cosmopolitan*. The feature entitled ‘Employers we love’ (August 1995, p.12-8), introduces the companies that have won its Gold Star Award in 1995 on the basis that they *really* work for women. What ‘they *really* work for women’ means according to *Cosmopolitan* is that they have fought against sex discrimination, introduced flexible working arrangements and set policies to employ more women. The content of this article can be viewed as a celebration of post-feminism regarding the fact that sex discrimination legislation was in place and ‘equal opportunities’ policies were adopted by influential companies. The things that have been claimed in this feature create a false picture of what *Cosmopolitan* really is now because, although it might have done so in the past, it does not deal with equal opportunities at work at present. It argues

‘*Cosmo* has a reputation for saying things other magazines don’t. And we’re not talking about orgasms. We’ve exposed the myth of equal pay, the weakness of the Equal Opportunities Commission...They are subjects other women’s magazines avoid for fear of “turning readers off”. But judging from our mailbag, this is the kind of talk that turns *Cosmo* readers *on*’ (ibid.).

It is in this way that *Cosmopolitan* tries to differentiate itself from its rivals. However, its claim seems controversial for two reasons: firstly, these issues might have been discussed in the past but are hardly discussed in the slot entitled ‘Career’ in the issues examined. It predominantly deals with money matters, with being technologically competent, with how to cope with problems and difficulties of office work etc. Secondly, although it warns the reader not to confuse these ‘serious, important’ matters with sex, the reading of sub-texts might suggest that there is a reference to sex, which has been done by using a sexual reference of ‘turning readers *on* and *off*’.

It makes it possible to draw on the attractiveness of the 'sexy' language style of women's magazines.

While women's employment is more associated with career, style and consumption in *Cosmopolitan*, *New Woman* seems to deal with 'real' women's problems raised by the feminist movement. *New Woman* offers women advice on practical problems at work, such as, how to give a great interview, how to handle appraisal, how to talk your way to a pay rise, how to claim your rights and so on. These issues are dealt with in a slot entitled 'Reporter: All you need to know to stay ahead'. Many social and personal issues are covered here: Health, relationships, employment, holiday, money matters and so on. In the slot entitled 'The private world of..', women, who are often media figures, are introduced. The emphasis is on their occupations, and their routine work and daily life. Their choice of women is varied: from a circus performer, a model, a manager for *Spitting Image*³⁹ to a nun and a stripper. By presenting the considerable diversity of women's lives *New Woman* breaks away from the stereotypical images of women and constructs a multiplicity of images of them. The nature of this slot and of some others in *New Woman* could be interpreted as an attempt to present 'real' women's lives rather than to create an imagined, ideal world for women.

In patriarchal societies, as feminist media researchers point out, there is a need for a more realistic representation of women in order to end women's marginality in the political, economic spheres and other power structures. The important question to

³⁹ *Spitting Image* was a popular satirical television programme which caricaturised well known personalities using puppets. It ran from mid-1980s to mid-1990s in the UK.

pose here is whether women's magazines or other women's genres attempt to help women cope with their 'marginality' in the private and public spheres. As my analysis of this theme and also the other themes has illustrated the women's magazines in the years studied try to create a space, as much as their conventions allow, to question the male dominant structured society and to offer solutions to be able to cope with it. However, as it has already been pointed out, they do not go so far as to suggest radical changes to create alternatives to transform the patriarchal system.

REPRESENTATIONS OF FEMINISM(S) AND FEMINIST POLITICS

Coverage and treatment of this theme marks the main differences between the British and the Turkish magazines. Considering the content of the magazines there is no doubt that feminism has had some impact in both countries. But as the histories and the cultural contexts within which contemporary feminist movements have developed in these two countries are different, representations and perceptions of the concept 'feminism' will, inevitably, differ. My enumeration through content analysis suggests that there is very little discussion of feminism in the British magazines. There are only a few articles which overtly deal with feminist issues. However, diverse discourses providing feminist ideas and messages are spread throughout the magazines as important subtexts. On the other hand, in the Turkish magazines topics relating directly to feminism, women's movements and politics accounted for about one third of the editorial copy. Feminist discourses, i.e. sexual freedom or equal

opportunity as has been noted earlier, are explicitly represented, especially in slots devoted to reports on feminist activism and feminist debates.

Feminist principles, 'the acceptable face of feminism' as Ballaster *et al.*⁴⁰ terms it, have been incorporated into the discourse of popular culture texts since the 1980s in the West either in the visual or written media. It applies to women's magazines in general and specifically to *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman*. As Winship points out, 'many feminists would probably dismiss and disown *Cosmo's* inclinations towards feminism as variously reformist, recuperative or compromising'⁴¹. Many feminists might share this view but it appears that young women's magazines in general tackle some issues affecting women as well as some contradictions about being a woman that traditional feminist discourses fail to deal with. *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* address such issues in their own ways and offer solutions to many of the problems associated with being a woman in the so-called postmodern society. The Turkish magazines, *Kim* and *Kadınca*, more or less address the same issues concerning women though in a different context, in Turkey an Islamic and developing country. This theme is examined under three sub-headings in order to compare and contrast the British and Turkish women's magazines in a wider context in terms of the ways they reappropriate and represent feminist values and ideas.

⁴⁰ Ballaster *et al.*, 1991.

⁴¹ Winship, 1987, p.115.

***Diverse Feminist Perspectives:
Individualization of Feminist Values vs. Collective/Political Activism***

According to the findings of my analysis, the British and the Turkish magazines differ in multiple ways in their approach to feminism. *New Woman* and *Cosmopolitan* locate solutions to male oppression predominantly in the domain of women's subjectivities rather than in the social order. As a result of this, feminist ideas have often been reduced to a matter of having a choice and a consumer value in these magazines. This approach can be seen as a result of the 'dominant ideologies' the 1980s and early 1990s exhibited about women, women's lives, women's options, women's choices which have shaped the popular 'feminist' discourses of the British magazines, and Walters links these discourses under the banner term *postfeminism*.⁴²

Many women in the West now consider feminism a historical rather than a current ideology as there is widespread appreciation of the fact that feminist discourses have infiltrated into the discourses of consumerism and popular culture. Contemporary women's magazines, including *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman*, embody and exemplify this approach to feminism and feminist discourses. Linda Wood, for instance, describes *Cosmopolitan* as 'postfeminist' by underlying the fact that 'the movement has not finished but the major battles have been won' (Appendix A, p.ii). In the process of incorporation and revision of the central goals of second wave feminism, feminism's ideological challenge and its politics often get ignored (this point will be discussed further in the next section). When the surface terminology is

⁴² Suzanna Walters, *Material Girls: Making Sense of Feminist Cultural Theory*, (London: University of California Press, 1995), p. 117.

adopted, without taking on board the ideology that underpins it, the term feminism becomes depoliticised and/or distorted. For example, by referring to advertising, Robert Goldman argues that 'ads turn feminist *social* goals into individual lifestyles'⁴³. Advertisements in the magazines in the years examined are discussed in this light later. While Goldman's point is observed for the British magazines, in the meantime, as was mentioned, they deal with practical feminist issues concerned with health, employment, the law, rape, abortion and so on. Nevertheless, feminist ideas and values are expressed almost entirely in personal terms in the British magazines, using the concept of feminism as a tool for personal achievements. For example, the rape incident discussed below illustrates this approach.

Unlike the British women's magazines, various forms of male oppression such as domestic violence or rape are seen as important legal, social and political problems by the Turkish women's magazines, and therefore their solutions are often located in the social order. Such issues appear more often in the Turkish magazines than the British magazines. For example, rape is covered widely and dealt with in detail in *Kim*. Political and social aspects of the problem are discussed with strong language: 'The number of rape cases taking place in police stations have increased' (September 1995, p.31); 'Rape is encouraged by the authorities' (July 1995, p.28); 'The father of the raped woman committed suicide, her husband left home? What should the woman do? Who is going to help her? It is not her fault' (October 1995, p.33). Some rape

⁴³ Robert Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially*, (London: Routledge, 1992), p.132.

incidents, which have occupied public and media attention, are reported critically from a feminist point of view.

Cosmopolitan and *New Woman* tend to personalize the problem and present a view as if it were an individual rather than a social problem. Rape cases are often presented through talk about personal feelings. *New Woman* (1995 August, p.44) also includes male rape and claims that it is much more widespread than statistics indicate. It seems that *Cosmopolitan* distances itself from this kind of 'unpleasant' issue by publishing only two features on the subject. The first one is entitled 'Russian women: When sex with the boss is part of the job', and it discusses the sexual harassment and rape Russian women experience at work, commenting that 'women here have such low self-esteem' (May 1995, p.22-8).

The second feature is about a rape incident, and the way it is covered and treated by *Cosmopolitan* is significant as it reveals the magazine's 'ideology' and its conventionality. The way the story is represented illustrates its appropriation of post-feminist discourse and it also portrays an image of the 1990s woman constructed by *Cosmopolitan*. The feature is entitled 'I was raped and it changed my life - for the better' (May 1996, p.61-4). The rape incident makes the 'victim' question sexual freedom, which women have struggled to gain since the late 1960s, her life and her psychical appearance. She says 'I started thinking the rape could have been my fault. After all, I'd been wearing sexy clothes, I'd flirted with him, danced with him, even kissed him'. It could be argued that this statement is made from a male point of view:

If women do not behave within the confines defined by men, they deserve punishment. The victim appears to internalise the accepted role of a woman imposed by the patriarchy as part of her own sense of identity. Internalisation of patriarchal ideology points to the way how it produces false-consciousness and becomes 'common sense'. Gramsci's concepts of 'common sense' and 'hegemony' which he uses to analyse class ideology can be applied to this incident, to analyse the ideological constructions of gender relations in order to illustrate the way in which patriarchal and feminist discourses are used and incorporated for the benefit of patriarchy and capitalism. According to Gramsci:

...hegemony naturalizes what is historically a class ideology, and renders it into the form of common sense. The upshot is that power can be exercised not as force but as 'authority'; and 'cultural' aspects of life are depoliticised. Those strategies for making sense of one's self and the world that are most easily available and officially encouraged appear not as strategies but as natural properties of 'human nature'.⁴⁴

The media industries today play a significant role in producing common sense. Common sense produces assumptions about social groups, values, norms etc.; it also provides the limits between what is natural and unnatural, what is acceptable and unacceptable to do or to discuss. As happens in this case she feels guilty about her rape and it implies that she considers her situation and questions her life from a male point of view. She feels bad about herself, as being 'drunk and promiscuous'; the defence lawyer also describes her in this way. She goes on to say 'Ironically, before I went out on the night I was raped, I had made a big decision - no more one-night stands'. The rapist was found not guilty. One of the traditional explanations and

⁴⁴ Tim O'Sullivan *et al.*, *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies*, (Second Edition) (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 134-5.

shared meanings of rape seemed to be considered in this incident which is: She provoked rape by the way she dressed and by getting drunk and dancing. This patriarchal view perpetuates and reinforces stereotypical role models for women in society. As Coppock *et al.* argue 'courts are preoccupied with the 'moral character' of women and in cases of rape or sexual assault it is usually *her* sexual behaviour that is the focus of attention rather than that of the male accused'⁴⁵. According to patriarchal institutions, in this case the criminal justice system, she showed signs of positive sexuality and therefore her morality was questioned as she did not accommodate what was considered 'appropriate' behaviour or fit the role model ascribed to women.

The reason for *Cosmopolitan* to be interested in this rape case seems that the victim has made an effort to change her life, her lifestyle, and gained self-confidence, in the way that *Cosmopolitan* encourages its readers to do. She explains how the incident helped her to gain self-esteem: 'It was probably the first time in my life I had ever spoken up for myself (at the court). It sounds strange but I knew, having achieved that, anything else I wanted to achieve in life might be possible'. Indeed, according to *Cosmopolitan*, she succeeded in changing several things in her life, such as feeling confident enough to go out 'wearing something feminine and sexy'. She admits that 'before the rape, I felt under pressure to look attractive to other people. These days I understand what it means to look good *for yourself*...I'm living a healthy lifestyle and having fun'. Her speech suggests that she dresses for herself, enjoys creating her own image and gains pleasure from her appearance.

⁴⁵ Coppock *et al.*, 1995, p. 31.

However, her attempt to establish a personal identity in this way raises a question as to whether an individual woman is able to dress 'for herself'. As Coppock *et al.* point out 'more often than not, identities are constructed beyond the "self". "Alternatives" are also packaged and there are limitations on the products available within which women can establish personal identities'⁴⁶. Indeed, the girl in the rape incident shows that she tries to establish a personal identity within male defined parameters by accepting male values. Although she claims that she is in control of constructing her 'self' identity, as the rape case shows, she cannot control how she is perceived by men and male dominated institutions, even by *Cosmopolitan*. The photograph that accompanies the text represents clearly how she is perceived. (see Appendix B)

What she appears to achieve, in the end, is to be what a Cosmo girl would be expected to be: employed, independent, self-confident, feminine, sexy, involved in a heterosexual relationship, trendy with style. As quoted above, the use of patriarchy as an 'authority' in the representation of this rape case de-politicises feminist ideology and naturalizes male dominance. Sam Baker criticizes this ambivalent attitude of *Cosmopolitan* and says 'we would never do anything that we consider anti-women. We would never publish anything like that. We would consider it as immoral. It is perhaps about the tone and about the treatment of an important emotional issue' (Appendix A, p. vi). Baker's comment points to a crucial issue about *Cosmopolitan's* and *New Woman's* moral stance regarding women and suggests that representing a rape 'victim' and implying that she is responsible for her own rape is not approved by

⁴⁶ Coppock *et al.*, 1995, p. 29.

New Woman. This incident provides evidence to argue that the policies of *New Woman* may be more sensitive to the feminist critics of patriarchal ideology. Consequently, while *Cosmopolitan* attempts to incorporate hegemonic (patriarchy) and counter-hegemonic (feminist) forms, it reproduces the notion that hegemony cannot be total. Patriarchal and feminist values are used in a way that suggests that the norms of the dominant culture are not fixed and static.

The articles, which directly engage with feminism, are very few in *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman*. In the issues examined, there are only three articles published by *New Woman* that directly deal with feminist issues. In the first one, a feature entitled 'Mothers can be feminist too', Maureen Freely, a novelist and journalist, attacks feminists for marginalizing mothers from feminist debates. She argues that mothers appear on the feminist agenda as victims, as people who can't speak for themselves.

If feminism isn't just a luxury option for the chosen few, if it's about improving the lot of all women in this generation as well as generations to come, if it's about getting ordinary women to decide for themselves what they think is important, then mothers have to be at the centre of the picture instead of on the margins - where feminist thought still puts them.⁴⁷

New Woman's attempt to raise this issue in a critical way shows its will to engage with current feminist debates. By addressing the major postfeminist paradigm, which condemns feminism for ignoring motherhood, it opens up a space to discuss and criticize those feminists who produced hostility towards motherhood. Some feminists have developed conflicting ideas about motherhood since the 1970s. As Letherby put it 'in the early days of the Women's Liberation Movement, the emphasis was on

⁴⁷ Maureen Freely, *New Woman*, November 1995, p.61.

challenging the myth that motherhood was women's inevitable destiny...and the Women's Movement provided a space for women to voice the negative aspects of mothering'⁴⁸. The issue of motherhood still remains as a conflicting subject among feminists.

In another article, *New Woman* questions whether men really want assertive women and comments that perhaps it is a new way for men to patronize women (July 1995, p.57). Yet another article entitled 'Breadwinner Backlash' deals with the touchy subject of women earning higher salaries than their spouses. Reporting that, 'One in five women in Britain today earns more than her partner....There is disturbing news from the US that professional women are paying a higher price for divorce', (October 1995, p.54) one of the consequences of feminist achievement.

While *New Woman* deals with the subject seriously, the style of *Cosmopolitan* is more ironic and mocking. It goes to greater extremes to shock the reader and hence attract attention. This sensationalism, however, enables it to deal with marginal people. For example, a feature entitled 'Feminists who strip: Post-porn modernists bare all in the name of art and politics' (April 1995, p.122-5) is concerned with a subversive, political sex/art cabaret act and a small group of marginal, highly educated feminists who perform it. Nevertheless, *Cosmopolitan's* approach to dealing with marginal people, such as lesbians, transvestites or 'post-porn feminists' (a term used by the magazine), is not to question the rights and wrongs of their marginality but to simply

⁴⁸ G. Letherby, 'Mother or Not, Mother or What? Problems of Definition and Identity', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 1994, 17 (5), pp. 525-32, p.527.

treat them as fashion objects. Germaine Greer, a well-known feminist writer, is represented in the same way in a feature entitled 'The jury's out on Germaine Greer' (July 1995, p.48-51). Postfeminist discourse is constructed through these images and messages which celebrate the values and rights women gained in the last two decades through the women's liberation movements. For example, one of these features in *Cosmopolitan*, entitled 'The new optimism' (January 1995, p.12-6), states that there has never been a more exciting time to be a young woman - the future has never looked brighter for women. As the title suggests, it is a new optimism, women are encouraged to enjoy their individuality, freedom and what they have as women: 'I have choices in my life that my mother's generation could only dream about because there is no pressure on me to have a husband or children' (ibid.). This again suggests individual achievement, and personalized goals rather than collective goals for women and therefore lacks enough determination to challenge the patriarchal order.

By comparison with the British magazines, *Kim* and *Kadınca* are more concerned with collective feminist issues, political and legal issues rather than individualized aspects of feminism. In editorials and feature articles, the emphasis is on cultural and legal changes. They sometimes appear as a consciousness-raising source and often emphasize the importance of personal guidance as well as mass political action. They always encourage women to take an active role in politics and in other areas of public life in order to liberate themselves from male domination. For example, *Kim* openly supports women's projects and informs its readers about them: 'Do you want to work with an international project for women's and human rights?' (February 1995, p.31).

It provides information about the activities of this group in Turkey and invites women to work with them. The Turkish magazines, of course, are also concerned about market values, but their content shows what sells in Turkey in the mid-1990s. As the Turkish women's magazines devote a considerable space to discuss feminist issues and themes explicitly, the following section focuses on a detailed analysis regarding their approach to feminism.

Kim and Kadınca: A Thin Line Between Commercialism and Feminist Politics

While a critical reading of *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* suggests that appropriation of feminist struggles and gains in these texts reduces feminist goals to personal choices, *Kim* and *Kadınca* engage with feminist issues in a manner attempting to politicise women's personal lives. Like their British counterparts, *Kim* and *Kadınca* are traditional in format and fit into the genre of women's magazines in terms of visual style, layout, advertisements and so on. They speak to readers in the same personal tone as traditional women's magazines, intimately and individually and offer solutions as well as hope about equality. The editorial construction of the magazines emphasises women's daily lives and ways to improve them. The concept of 'gender equality' dominates the editorial perspective in *Kadınca* and *Kim*.

Analysis of *Kim* and *Kadınca* illustrates that they combine women's magazine discourses with the prominent slogan of feminist movements: 'the personal is political'. This slogan suggests multiple meanings, but it has worked in the Turkish context as a powerful metaphor for women beginning to see the political implications

of their own lives. For *Kim* and *Kadınca*, the slogan worked to bring together the spirit of the women's magazines, which emphasizes women's daily lives and ways to improve them, with the spirit of a political and social movement, feminism, which emphasizes political aspects of women's personal lives. In her research on *Ms.*, an American national feminist magazine, Farrell notices the same characteristic for *Ms.* in the context of 1970s America.⁴⁹

Content analysis of the magazines suggests that one of the ways in which Turkish magazines differ from their British counterparts is their responsibility and relation to feminism. *Kim* and *Kadınca*, both follow current events and report them as equally important as other issues. Unlike a feminist magazine, they do not perhaps aim to provide and open a forum for feminist debates as such but are concerned with feminist politics and values. They engage more often in political discussions of 1990s' problems than the British magazines; subjects like the election system, underrepresentation of women in politics, alterations made in family law, changes in the ministry responsible for women's issues, the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women, are discussed and questioned more often in the Turkish magazines. Political and social issues concerning women in different countries are also reported more in the Turkish magazines. *Kim* also includes interviews with well-known foreign feminists, such as Naomi Wolf, the Dutch feminist Anja Meulenbelt or a Russian woman who has been exiled for being a feminist. Bringing different voices of feminism together shows that *Kim* does not present a single, fixed understanding of

⁴⁹ Amy Erdman Farrell, 'Feminism in the Mass Media: *Ms.* Magazine, 1972-1989', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, USA, 1991.

feminism but introduces diverse discourses of feminism. Representation of various discourses of feminism overlaps with the editors' understanding of feminism. For instance, Esra Kazancibasi, the editor of *Kadınca* states that 'I am a feminist but I do not wish to call myself a socialist or liberal feminist. Because, I share certain things with each group. Because there are different personalities, different views within one discourse which I do not want myself to identify with' (Appendix A, p.ix).

The responsibility *Kim* and *Kadınca* bear towards women who want to be familiar with feminist issues is clear. Their editorial roles are often pedagogic and authoritative, introducing feminist ideas and politics and making the reader aware of possible conflicting situations. The editors in their editorial articles give examples of real situations, aiming to enlighten the reader about both gender inequalities in society and possible solutions to overcome these inequalities.

The language used by Asena is worth noting. Instead of using the pronoun 'we' when taking up women's problems, the pronoun 'you' is used. This distancing is made possible by the editor who has been a popular public figure, with a liberated individual image and active role in the feminist movement since the early 1980s. By doing this, she perceives herself as an expert in this field and therefore has the right to educate 'other' women on women's issues. Asena speaks directly to the constructed image of the person who needs to be advised. She gives examples from her experience. Consequently the message is 'if I can do it, so can you'. As Saktanber points out this is 'the most important stance that separates the magazine's discourse

from that of feminism, which by calling on all women (us) does not construct an 'other' woman'⁵⁰. The use of the collective 'we' in feminist writing refers to a desire to assert a solidarity, to forge a sisterhood, to oppose patriarchy. While Asena tries to raise women's consciousness about women's issues she places herself outside the notion of sisterhood. But Asena's use of a specific language must be understood in terms of how she perceives herself in relation to her readers and in the wider cultural context of Turkey: she conceives of herself as an 'intellectual', and experienced person who gives advice to and teaches the 'other' women. This attitude is common among people in Turkey who see themselves as the 'intellectuals' or 'elites', who tend to distance themselves from the rest of society by using the pronouns 'we' and 'they'.

Considering the differences between the two Turkish magazines, Asena points out that there are more similarities between the two magazines than differences. One of the similarities in terms of content is that they both have a slot which is illustrative of their attempt to underline their feminist identities. The slot entitled 'witch like' (brickbats) in *Kim* is significant for its political and ideological approach to feminism. The word 'witch' has been used in the last five decades both in Europe and America to define (radical) feminists who were opposing and criticizing the traditional patriarchal values and norms. Historically, especially in 16th and 17th century Europe, a woman labelled as a witch was punished for her 'supernatural' abilities which were seen as a threat to male power. Feminists, who were identified as witches,

⁵⁰ Saktanber, 1995, p. 160.

were seen as marginal, ‘dissident’ women. The way *Kim* uses the word totally changes its connotation and attributes a positive meaning to it. Duygu Asena explains that it was her idea and her aim was to change the image of the ‘witch’ in a positive way and to show that she is cute, lovely and nice. (Appendix A, p.xix) The drawing of the witch illustrates this idea visually (see Appendix B). Redefining the witch in this way, *Kim* tries to show that witches, thus feminists, are not threatening or dangerous. It is a strategy to make issues of the women’s movement part of the popular discourse and legitimise its aims and goals. This section is illustrative of the ways in which *Kim* deals with contradictions of gender power relations and inequalities, and of its attempt to subvert patriarchy. It allows the ‘dissident’ to refuse to subordinate her wish to indulge her individuality and freedom of expression to the exigencies of traditionally established gender roles.

There is a very similar slot to ‘witch like’ in *Kadınca* entitled ‘Pink Pages’. These two slots cover almost the same issues but with a different style: *Kim* is more ironic and uses a stronger, provocative language, even the title of the slot in *Kadınca* suggests this difference. All issues which are on the feminist agenda in Turkey are dealt with, such as women’s NGOs’ activities and policies, changes in family law, equal treatment in the eye of law, women’s shelters, the political parties’ policies for women, domestic violence, successful women in trade unions, international women’s conferences, sexual abuse, rape, virginity tests and so on. They also include issues that are not often discussed or are considered to be taboo, for example, incest, child abuse or prostitutes’ right to have social security.

Both *Kim* and *Kadinca* have a page within this slot where they follow the issues of and debates on feminism and women's rights discussed in popular culture and in politics. In *Kadinca* this page is entitled '*Kadinca's* Choice', the top half of which lists, under the logo of a photo of lips, 'the ones to be kissed', i.e. praised. These people are usually media figure heads and politicians who support male-female equality and who say positive things about women. The bottom half of the page lists the names of those who have demeaned women, this time under the logo of lips and the words 'the ones who need paper' referring to a popular form of punishment meted out to children who speak rude words.

A similar page appears in *Kim* entitled '*Kim's* most loved and unloved ones' under the logo of a photo of lips 'the ones who are kissed by a witch' and at the bottom half of the page under the logo of a boiler and the words 'the ones who are boiled by a witch' referring to the stereotypical image of a witch. This idea was created by Asena and her staff when they were running *Kadinca*, and now both magazines use it. These slots provide evidence of their attempt to create a space for themselves to interact with popular discourses, but with a sense of irony.

The extent these magazines cover and deal with feminist issues can be seen as a contribution to the process of policy making. They inform a wide range of audiences about the current feminist debates. Thus their effort to open up a space to discuss diversified views and debates on feminist issues supports the argument that these

texts allow ways and provide an outlet which might serve as a basis from which to develop feminist politics among shifting definitions of feminism. The negative connotations feminism is assigned, especially for being opposed to the norms of the patriarchal system, causes some women to reject identifying themselves as feminists. *Kim* and *Kadınca* provide these women with a platform for their expressions where women's 'real' problems or experiences (e.g. domestic violence, rape, inequality in workplace and so on.) are discussed in line with feminist politics. Consequently, their effort to create a space to discuss feminism from different approaches can be seen as a process of naturalizing feminist values and ideas, and gradually making feminist meanings a reference point in culture.

The Turkish magazines devote sufficient space to discuss oppositional feminist ideas, whether Islamist, radical or liberal. Distinct and sometimes controversial issues are covered more in *Kim* than *Kadınca*. In an interview Kezban and Hüseyin Hatemi, a couple known as Islamist feminists, claimed that the prophet Mohammed was the first known feminist. According to Kezban Hatemi women's rights are equal to human rights: 'I believe in equality in all areas of life but women's rights slogans caused discrimination between men and women. The problems concerning woman should be considered and treated in the context of human rights. (*Kim*, May 1995, p.62-4). She tries carefully to distance herself from radical feminists and criticizes them for destroying family values. Yet she acknowledges that women are oppressed by men and adds 'women should get educated, know their rights, and be active in the

workplace' (ibid.). Hüseyin Hatemi agrees with his wife about the fact that women are oppressed and treated as second class citizens and says,

We haven't yet established a social welfare system to protect women's rights. They need help and support: in this sense I support feminism. I am an Islamist feminist. If someone says "I value Islamist values, this means s/he is a feminist. There is no gender inequality in the Koran except that it identifies the husband as the head of the family (ibid.).

Their Islamist views dismiss the feminist struggle in many ways, especially in its attempt to change the family structure and gender power relations in the domestic sphere. While claiming their Islamist feminist identity, they accept male domination in the private sphere by maintaining the husband as the head of the family, which has been one of the most problematic areas for feminist politics in Turkey. Women's NGOs have been putting pressure on the government to amend the family law for a long time. At the end of the interview there is a note by the interviewer, which shows *Kim*'s cynicism about their approach to feminist issues: 'It seems the witches are informed correctly. Perhaps the Hatemis are really FEMINISTS'.

In the same issue of *Kim* (May 1995) there is another interview on feminism with Aysel Baykal who had then been appointed the Minister responsible for women's issues. Her notion of feminism represents another approach to feminism. The first thing she had said about feminism in her new career was 'while feminism contains discrimination within itself, it is also out of fashion'. *Kim* comments on this statement and says 'women Ministers first distance themselves from feminism but their attitudes change soon after. Perhaps they come to understand that feminism means fighting for

women's rights' (May 1995, p.34-35). In the interview, Baykal tries to distance herself from radical feminists, like the Hatemis and defines feminism as follows:

Feminism is an ideology which aims to promote women's status in society and fights against gender inequality. Yet there are different ideas about the roots of these problems and a variety of solutions are offered by feminists. Radical feminists isolated the roots of women's problems from social and economic reasons and argued that men are to be blamed for causing these problems. It is a discriminatory argument. They imagine that a society only consists of women. This is far from reality. (ibid.).

Baykal tries to make clear where she stands within this controversial debate; basically she presents her views in a way that would not disturb the state policies. Later in the same interview she acknowledges the importance of the feminist contribution to the development of the women's movement and explains why feminism has become 'out of date': 'It is not easy to change established traditional values but women want to see changes in their lives. That's why human rights, citizen rights, inequality in social and economic issues have replaced feminism and feminist theories' (ibid.). Her explanation does not seem to acknowledge the fact that women are still discriminated against in the eyes of law, in the private and public spheres for being women.

Baykal's view represents the so-called 'state feminism' that has been on the agenda since the establishment of the Turkish Republic (as discussed in chapter one). State feminism can also be interpreted as 'equal rights' feminism for which integration of women into the world of men is the ultimate goal. On the same page, in a different article, Ayse Düzkan, who is one of the founders of the only nationally distributed feminist magazine *Pazartesi*, responds strongly to Baykal's claims about feminism being 'out of fashion' and discriminative. By including these oppositional views, *Kim*

attempts to go beyond institutionalised feminism and the negative myths popular culture produces about feminism. Düzkan's notion of feminism condemns patriarchy but in a different form of rejection than Baykal's.

One of the most well known voices of institutionalised feminism, Necla Arat, who is the head of the first women's studies centre launched in Turkey at Istanbul University, often appears in *Kim* and *Kadınca*. In an interview with Arat, she argues for 'equal rights' feminism and criticizes radical feminists for not putting their theories into practice and also for being responsible for the misinterpretation of the concept of feminism in Turkey. She says, 'people would not have hesitated saying "I am a feminist" if the concept had been interpreted as "feminism equals equality". Then it would have become closer to and coincide with human rights' (*Kadınca*, July 1995, p.37-38). In another interview with Özlem Bozkurt, one of the two female governors⁵¹ of Turkey, expressed similar views about feminism and said 'I do not support feminist ideas because feminism means discrimination to me...I never felt myself as a "woman" governor that's why I don't face any gender discrimination (*Kim*, September 1995, p.84). She argues that not only feminists but also other people fight for civil rights. So for her there is no need to separate women's rights from human rights. Her approach is very similar to Tansu Çiller's, who was then the Prime Minister, in her attempts to legitimise her power by appropriating male norms of public behaviour.

⁵¹ A governor is a person who rules a province and who is appointed by the government.

As the above examples provide evidence, there is a tendency in Turkey to associate feminism with ‘equality’ and to use the term ‘human rights’ instead of women’s rights. Equality is a weak term and does not cover ideas and values of second wave feminism. Replacement of women’s rights with human rights prevents women from acknowledging the problems that stem from being a woman. It also depoliticises them in their struggle for their rights in the private and public spheres.

In opposition to this view, a feature by Filiz Koçali, a feminist writer and activist who also works at *Pazartesi*, refers to the distorted version of feminism constructed in popular discourses and explains what feminism *actually* means. She argues that there are eight different understandings of feminism in Turkey and all are biased. She states,

Nowadays, it is again “in” to swear at feminists, to label feminists “ugly”, “man haters”, and “lesbian”. Instead of these negative connotations, feminism is the political movement which has been discussed much more than other movements. We are tired of writing again and again to explain what feminism *is* and *is not* but people are still biased. (*Kim*, January 1995, p.32-3).

To correct the ‘sexist’ understanding of the term feminism, three definitions from British encyclopaedias are provided in a box. Both Düzkan and Koçali are known as radical feminists who argue for more democratic gender relations and who raise questions about female sexuality and other taboo issues.

Kim and *Kadınca* differ in their style of dealing with feminist issues. Controversial views on feminism are discussed in a rather serious manner in *Kadınca*. Its style is

more like a journalistic style, reporting facts, whereas *Kim* adds a bit of irony, commentary and sometimes uses a strong language to criticize oppositional ideas. A new page introduced in mid-1995 entitled 'Nuri and Huri' is another example of this style where a macho man and a feminist woman are caricatured. There is an ongoing argument between Nuri and Huri about the qualities of femininity and masculinity and they constantly denigrate each other's gender attributes.

Their language and style also differ in their dealings with Tansu Çiller who was then the Prime Minister. When Çiller was elected as the (first woman) Prime Minister in 1995 most feminists had been sympathetic to her including *Kim* and *Kadınca*. They expected Çiller to be interested in 'women's issues' but in a short time they were disappointed to find out that she had adopted male values to legitimise her power. While *Kadınca*'s critical report included Çiller's limited policies to improve women's status in society, *Kim* used a strong and provocative language to criticize the female Prime Minister. Çiller was portrayed in men's attire (having a male body with male clothes on) and its caption read that 'She was discovered to be a male impostor posing as a woman' (August 1995, p.48-9). This article illustrates that *Kim* did not hesitate to use, as it often does, ironic and sarcastic language in its criticism of Çiller.

Kim and *Kadınca* follow a feminist line that does not necessarily search for an ideal model for Turkish women. Instead, they seem constantly to search for alternatives and thus espouse contradiction and diversity. Yet compared to *Kim*, *Kadınca* has a more conservative approach to feminism in its representation. *Kadınca* does this by its very

choice of people to talk about women's issues. For example, when there is a need for an expert to discuss the women's movement, Prof. Necla Arat is usually interviewed or quoted. She is represented as someone who is a supporter of 'women's rights' but at the same time she is a responsible mother and wife. She talks about domestic duties that are traditionally considered to be woman's jobs, such as growing plants, going back to cook grandmother's home-made jam, child rearing and so on. This representation reinforces traditionally accepted women's roles in family life. It fits very well with the dominant ideology in most Turkish cultures, in which employed women could be considered 'successful' if they are at the same time perfect housewives and mothers. This view postulates the family as the core of society and homemaking as entirely women's responsibility. Representing a well known 'feminist' academic in this way suggests that *Kadınca* partly supports a 'Kemalist' line in its understanding of feminism. 'Kemalist feminism' refers to a fixed identity of modern women developed during the 'westernisation movement' when the Republic of Turkey was founded. As was discussed in the previous chapter, the institutionalisation of the modern view of Turkish women during the Republican period has created a fixed and conservative perception of women.

Although it is rare, there are contributors from male writers and male views of feminism are expressed in the Turkish women's magazines examined in this study. These contributors feel comfortable with the feminist discourse but sometimes they represent feminists as dislikeable or negative. In this context, for example, Rauf Denktaş, the Prime Minister of Northern Cyprus, argues that 'feminists are women

who are either divorced, or never got married, or men haters and miserable. I support women's rights, but feminism has gone in a different direction. The ideal woman is soft, nice, beautiful, not the one who screams like a witch and makes trouble' (*Kim*, February 1995, p.34). For Denktas, like some other people, feminism or feminist struggle and women's rights are considered separately, while the former is given negative connotations, the later is given positive connotations. Nevertheless, his definition of the ideal woman, which is a fixed woman's image accepted by male dominated society, is far from the goals and ideas of feminist movements.

On the other hand, some other male contributors' perception of feminism could be more acceptable to feminists. For example, Ercan Karakus, the Minister of Culture, says 'Of course I am a feminist' (*Kadinca*, June 1995, p.40). For him, democracy means and demands equality and freedom. He suggests that women should take a more active role in politics and in other areas of social life. Another contributor Nedim Saban, a playwright and television talk show presenter, defines what feminism is and what it is to be a feminist:

It is not a power struggle but rather a way of changing the world. To me, a feminist woman is a woman who doesn't perceive or doesn't want to perceive herself from a male point of view. I do not call it equality because "women equal to men" means to me discrimination...I consider sexuality as a political issue. There is a sex terror in Turkey. When girls get pregnant they commit suicide. We ignore these facts and keep our taboos. (*Kadinca*, January 1995, p.28-9).

He argues that a person owns his/her body and s/he is free to do whatever s/he wants to do with it; sexuality shouldn't be a way of defining people. Drawing attention to

the male perception of feminism, *Kim* and *Kadınca* attempt to engage people, men as well as women, from different backgrounds and perspectives, and present diversified, controversial views on feminist issues.

To conclude, *Kim* or *Kadınca* deal with diverse discourses of feminism. It could be argued that they have a liberal view on women's issues in general and yet they represent diversities and contradictions of feminisms experienced in Turkey in the 1990s. As discussed in chapter one, feminist discourses today are diversified, and include secular/Kemalist, socialist, radical, and Islamic feminists. These magazines' focus on securing formal rights for women in the public sphere, e.g. progressive amendments to sex discrimination laws are associated with liberal feminist concerns which, to a large extent, equal the ideology of secular feminism in Turkey. Their coverage of employment, trade unions, struggles to improve employment opportunities and conditions for women make their line closer to socialist feminism. And also their dealings with sexual harassment at work and sexual and domestic violence towards women link these magazines to what tends to be seen as radical feminist concerns. In addition, they also include Islamic perspectives on feminist issues. Representations of this broad-based feminism illustrate that the Turkish magazines have recognized the connectedness of these issues within women's lives and felt responsible for their readers to bring up these issues and discuss them in different contexts, from different perspectives.

Commodified versions of feminism: Advertising reconstructs a 'femini/ne-st' image for the 1990s' woman

Texts in the contemporary women's magazines analysed in this study contain many subjectivities, for example, women are not only constructed as being preoccupied with aspirations and achievements concerning personal and emotional issues but are also constructed as strong, economically independent and self-confident individuals. As discussed earlier, many articles emphasize the need for women to increase their self-esteem, to assert their needs and desires but at the same time value their femininity. The underlying message is that by valuing their femininity through beautification and making themselves attractive, they can easily achieve increased self-esteem and fulfilment of their desires. In *Cosmopolitan*, especially, beauty is seen to equal self-confidence. Care of the body, including fitness can also be seen as a source of liberation and empowerment in women's magazines. Coppock *et al.* argue that 'the sense of achievement and control derived from fitness can encourage women to tackle other physical, mental, social or political challenges'⁵². However, they point out that the ideal body image presented as 'acceptable' remains a stereotype of a 'feminine' body. Through adopting feminist values into commercial values in this way, producers of women's magazines re-define and re-present ideal images of femininity for the 1990s' women. Such an approach to women's beauty and body by women's magazine's can be considered as 'postfeminist' in the sense discussed earlier, which signifies that feminist values have been transformed into what attractiveness means to men.

⁵² Coppock *et al.*, 1995, p.26.

The message of freedom and self-fulfilment advocated by feminism is emphasized strongly but with the primary aim of selling the magazine and the products advertised in the magazine. Thus feminism in the pages of contemporary women's magazines seems to be becoming whatever the individual reader makes of it. Macdonald argues that 'consumer discourses in both advertising and the women's magazine press now eagerly absorbed the terminology of self-assertiveness and achievement, transforming feminism's challenging collective programme into atomised acts of individual consumption'⁵³. This transformation, taking place in the magazines, can be seen as a means to manipulate the cultural space feminism opened up for financial gain. It results in depoliticising feminist aims and goals.

During the 1970s and 1980s feminist discourses (as was mentioned previously, especially, 'cultural feminists') validated the importance of feminine qualities. This reclamation of the feminine made it easier for women's magazines to deal with the concepts of 'femininity' and 'feminism' once held to be mutually exclusive. Since the early 1970s, advertisers have appropriated feminism and have tried to connect the value and meaning of it to commercial products. As Goldman points out first 'femininity (was) recuperated by the capitalist form,'⁵⁴ now feminism is being similarly recuperated. In this process the term feminism has been redefined through commodities by the women's magazines and thus has been 'turned into yet another "raw material" in the never-ending drive to renew and expand the commodity-sing values of consumer goods' (ibid.).

⁵³ Macdonald, 1995, p. 91.

⁵⁴ Robert Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially*, (London: Routledge, 1992), p.131.

While some of the advertisements in the British magazines examined in this study draw on some of the compelling themes evoked by feminist politics, for instance, equality, freedom, sexual liberation, self-confidence and so on, they adopt commercial feminine values, such as the feminine beauty myth. This double edge in the representation of women seems lacking in the Turkish magazines. Depiction of women in advertisements by the Turkish magazines often presents clichéd images of women. For example, an oil advertisement and a wool advertisement in *Kadınca* (January 1995) or a household appliance advertisement in *Kim* (February 1995) reproduce a traditional domestic image of women. Therefore most advertisements published in them contradict the feminist ideas articulated elsewhere in the magazines. They are predominantly about fashion, beauty, the body and the domestic products which promote normative notions of femininity.

Advertisements of fashion, beauty and body products exist in the British magazines too but their advertising policies differ to a large degree in the way that they tend to construct the reader as a 'full' human being, not limited to home, to children, or to relationships with men. This is achieved by including advertising of 'unfeminine' products such as cars, insurance companies, cameras, Eurostar train tickets, credit cards and so on. There is no doubt that these advertisements perpetuate less sexist and stereotypical images of women. To illustrate their diverse approaches to advertising in terms of their use of commercial and feminist values, an advertisement from both the Turkish and the British magazines is analysed in depth.

Incorporation of feminist subtexts in either visual or written texts produced by editors, advertisers, and readers raises an important question as to what extent feminist messages embedded into these texts, especially in advertisements, can challenge the dominant understanding of femininity. Macdonald's observation about magazine advertising is significant here: 'connotations of feminist influence in advertisements in the magazines are subdued, but being "comfortable with who you are" is a common implicit injunction'⁵⁵. A Lux Soap advertisement published in *Cosmopolitan* provides a good example to examine this aspect of magazine advertising. The caption reads: 'I am not RITA HAYWORTH. I am ME'. The slogan across the advertisement appears as follows:

And happy to be me. And with the new Lux range, there's always something just right for me...whatever my mood, whatever my needs. I can choose from a range of sensations in shower gels, foam baths, beauty bars and liquid soap. Whether it's soothing relaxation, renewed vitality, or beautiful refreshment, the choice is mine. Each leaves my skin feeling beautiful, so I feel beautiful. And can't imagine wanting to be anyone else. New Lux range. Bring out the star in you. (see Appendix B)

This beauty advertisement sustains traditional femininity by paradoxically incorporating the values and goals of counter-hegemonic discourse. The method of deconstructive decoding of a text will be applied to examine how potentially subversive meanings are re-incorporated into dominant discourses in ways which encourage traditional notions of femininity. Postmodern writers often use this method to expose the constructed nature of truths presented within texts, often for the purpose of revealing multiple and often contradictory meanings.

⁵⁵ Macdonald, 1995, p.93.

In the Lux Soap advertisement, a picture of the product is accompanied by a photo of a woman who is lying on a bed and smiling. In decoding this text, it is noticed that the scene is intended to be a direct representation of reality. At the denotative level this scene is meant to be understood as a woman lying on her bed clean, relaxed and beautiful after having used Lux. Within this seemingly simple scene, however, there is a much more complex message. Contributing to the complexity is the nature of the image as well as the slogan: lying on a bed on her own, half naked indicates her self-confidence, her satisfaction with her sexual attraction. And the following words in the text

*...And happy to be me. There is always something just right for me...
whatever my mood, whatever my needs. I can choose*

reflects her independence, freedom of choice and her satisfaction at being herself. Lying on her bed alone with an attractive body and inviting look suggest that these positive feelings are associated interchangeably with the product and with male-female relationships. Thus the words used in the text signify that she is confident of her body, of her beauty and she can choose what she wants. Her freedom of choice could be understood in terms of many things such as a man, life style, commodity products and so on. It constructs an image of a woman who portrays herself as a happy individual, who is able to control her life since she is free, liberated and beautiful.

The caption 'I am not Rita Hayworth I am me...Bring out the star in you', on the one hand emphasizes bringing out individual 'feminine' identity which is valuable and

worthwhile. The caption, on the other hand, signifies that Hayworth is a complete myth and *I am me* represents an incomplete myth and invites the reader to identify herself with the image in the text in order to create her own myth. Thus, the advertisement gives the image of unexploited virgin woman and the reader who looks at it completes the myth. The strategy of this advertisement could be identified as postmodern. It has a subversive strategy, using feminist messages and engages with the beauty myth which enhances the dominant ideology. There is no dominant reading; it is elusive and open to multifaceted readings.

As my reading of this particular advertisement shows, social texts do not offer transparent meaning: they are complex, contradictory and unstable. Contradictions within a text can lead readers to reject dominant, preferred readings. As Fiske claims 'contradictions are a key to reader's agency because they provide a moment through which the reader draws upon "a resource bank" of potential meaning'⁵⁶. Here I have drawn upon my own readings to show how dominant meanings can be subverted. On the one hand, messages, that promoted beauty, are represented as equal to self-confidence and feminine independence, have been rejected. It was recognized that while the text purported to destroy one beauty myth it created yet another. On the other hand, the recognition of feminist subtexts has generated positive feelings about the text. Feminist messages which are embedded within a total discourse as subtexts stress both the naturalness and desirability of gender differentiation. To conclude, this advertisement constructs a discourse of postfeminism which endorses a women-

⁵⁶ John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, (Boston: Unwin, 1989), p. 4.

centred individualism and assumes rather than questions equal opportunity for women. As it has been pointed out earlier, the popular conception of postfeminism celebrates women's achievements within patriarchal norms, and thus, undermines the nature of women's liberation by directing women to individual goals.

Analysis of the Lux advertisement exemplifies how feminist subtexts are embedded into the discourse of *Cosmopolitan* through which the concept of femininity is reconstructed. In this respect the Turkish magazines differ to a large degree from their counterparts. There is a contradiction within the discourse of the Turkish magazines between a strong emphasis on feminist values in written texts and depiction of women in their traditional roles in advertisements, which produces stereotypical and sexist images of women. These two distinct discourses are not embedded but constructed separately.

The 'Ege Seramik' advertisement published in *Kim* (June 1995) is useful material to discuss this point further. Ege Seramik is a well-known ceramic company for home decoration in Turkey which exports all around the world. There are three different advertisements of Ege Seramik published as a series in the years examined. All of them consist of two full pages. On the right side of the advertisement there is a close-up picture of a woman which covers one third of the whole advertisement. Each series uses a different interior design and a woman from a different nationality: Japanese, Spanish and Italian. For the purpose of this study I examine only the Spanish one. (see Appendix B).

On the left page, there is a large bathroom which is designed in a Mediterranean style. The style of the window, swimming suits and sea ball are used as signifiers in the creation of Mediterranean atmosphere. The caption on this page reads: 'The world's preference Ege Seramik'. The product, which initially has no 'meaning' is given value by a person which already has a value to us. Therefore at this stage something about the product is being signified and the correlating person, the Spanish woman, is the signifier. The woman in the advertisement is represented as a 'typical' Spanish woman who is beautiful, attractive and sexy. The colour and style of her hair, the jewellery she wears and the way she looks reproduce a 'stereotypical' image of an Spanish woman. Advertisers tend to use stereotypes, which Perkins defines as 'short-circuit thinking'⁵⁷, as it makes their job easier and more convenient to give the message or the information to the audience in a direct and shorter way.

The Spanish woman is portrayed on the right side of the advertisement which is on the foreground and attracts the consumers' attention. The caption is written in Spanish at the top of the page and in Turkish at the bottom of the page which reads: 'Elegance and aestheticism is very important to me'. The caption refers on one level to the product - the ceramic. But in all this series, the women are shown in their traditional and stereotypical outlook; the captions refer to their nationally perceived characteristics, e.g. for the Japanese series it reads 'They are mysterious and charming. Like a dream', and the meaning on this level directly refers to the Japanese

⁵⁷ T.E. Perkins, 'Rethinking Stereotypes' in *Turning It On*, (eds.) Helen Baehr & Ann Gray, (London: Arnold, 1996), pp. 21-23, (p.22).

woman. Thus the characteristics of the women in the advertisements and the product are used interchangeably. This very identification of the woman with a product reduces her to a 'sexual' object to sell the product. Using only a female image in the advertisement, which is concerned with home decoration, reproduces the public/private dichotomy. It helps establish women's domestic roles as an innate female characteristic.

Analysis of the Ege Seramik advertisement suggests that the Turkish advertisers do not seem to be 'sophisticated' enough to include feminist goals and values as subtexts to sell the products to women. Almost all messages, be it feminist or popular, are denoted straight-forwardly by *Kadinca* and *Kim*, and are represented as fundamental messages. This means that 'commodity feminism', which represents 'the process of punning used to double and join the meanings of feminism and femininity'⁵⁸, is not yet realized as a commercial value by Turkish advertisers. The reason for this could be that they either do not acknowledge that there is such a consumer potential in the market, which is aware of the feminist ideology and benefited from the women's movement, or they fail to see this reality, or it could be a combination of both. This can be linked to the difference between British, or generally Western, and Turkish feminist ideals. As discussed earlier, feminist ideals have become 'common sense' and a reference point in culture in Britain.

⁵⁸ Goldman, 1992, p. 131.

In order to analyse advertising policies of the magazines, one should take into consideration the fact that complex power relationships enacted in women's magazines between writers, editors, owners are significant for their contents and advertising strategies. Therefore the contradiction observed in the nature of their contents and advertisements in the Turkish magazines can be seen as a result of these power relations. Restricted financial resources, to a large degree, make it more difficult for women's magazines to have a preference and a policy that goes in line with the discourse of the magazine. Commercial concerns of the owner of the publishing company appear to be very important in advertising policy. Women's magazines are products of the print industry and also crucial sites for the advertising and sale of other commodities. Therefore magazines are strongly involved in capitalist production and consumption as well as constructing an identity for the individual reader. Consequently, while supposedly pro-women, pro-feminist magazines *Kim* and *Kadınca* try to define womanhood outside male discourse, the concerns of the market economy play a significant role in perpetuating the dominant culture and thus, in turn, reproduce a patriarchal definition of woman.

Conclusion

To sum up the in-depth analysis of the four magazines, they differ in multiple ways in their articulations of feminism and in their representations of feminist issues. They cover similar issues in their own contexts; however, as Baker points out, the main difference between *New Woman* and its rivals is 'about tone and context rather than

content' (Appendix A, p. vi). The findings of this study support her claim for both the British and the Turkish women's magazines.

The main differences observed in the case study are that the British women's magazines redefine feminism often through commodities. As a result its counter-hegemonic discourses are channelled into the commodity form, thus it threatens neither patriarchal nor capitalist order. Domestication of feminism by advertisers and women's magazines over the last two decades has changed its representations in which feminist collective goals are reduced to individual choice and lifestyles. Their approach is defined as postfeminist which signifies incorporation, revision and depoliticisation of many of the central goals of the women's liberation movements. On the other hand, the Turkish magazines represent the current debates on feminist politics and issues in multiple ways. This aspect of the magazines reflects their responsibility and relation towards feminism and identifies them as semi-political sources of feminist movements in Turkey. It appears that the cultural power of feminism has not yet been discovered by the commodity culture, the advertisers. Feminism has not been exploited by the market values in the way it has been in Britain; feminist social goals and its critique of unequal social, economic and political relations are represented as important current feminist issues by the Turkish magazines.

CONCLUSION

After a decade of being treated as the 'F' word... feminism as a brand new media sexy image is on the rise across the country... Nineties feminism isn't simply about 'women's issues'... it is repositioning itself, making those... words 'feminism' and 'feminist' upbeat and mainstream.¹

In this thesis I have addressed the popularization of feminism through popular cultural texts in Britain and Turkey in the 1990s. Through my examination of contemporary women's magazines, I have identified productive ways of facilitating feminism's engagement with the popular. My findings, like those of Abdela's quoted above, reveal a new investment in feminism on the part of the media, in the senses of both capital and energy. Incorporation of feminist discourses with popular and commercial discourses in various ways has resulted in flexible redefinitions of feminism and femininity whereby they have been seen to encompass contradictory concerns about feminisms as well as pro-feminist attitudes.

The British and the Turkish women's magazines differ in multiple ways in their articulations of feminist thought; mainly in their style, tone and context: feminist resonance is implicit in the British magazines and explicit in the Turkish magazines. Such differences in their representations of feminism draw a parallel with the recent feminist issues discussed in chapter one. This interrelation supports the argument that women's magazines are highly influenced by the feminist movements, practices and discourses that form the context in and through which they come into being.

¹ Lesley Abdela, 'Action Women' in 'Feminism Now', *Cosmopolitan*, October, 1993, p.30.

The kind of feminism appropriated by the British women's magazines promotes populist women's aspirations centering on having wider options, greater freedom and autonomy. The 'New Woman' constructed in the pages of the women's magazines may be a myth, but she is also in many ways an inspiration. For example, the Lux soap advertisement analysed in the previous chapter, on the one hand presents a mythic woman image, on the other hand tries to break this myth by allowing the reader to create her own myth which implies empowerment, freedom etc. But this only applies within narrow urban confines to women of a specific class, race and age as the nature of the market requires a specifically defined audience. In this respect, *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* represent feminism through the lives of white, middle-class, heterosexual women. This particular group of women have benefited the most from feminist movements' gains and their privileged position puts them into best situation to practice 'individualist feminism'. As discussed in the first chapter, individualism was the key concept for conservative liberal policies between 1979-1997 and as a result promotion of individual freedom has broadened social, sexual and racial differences over this period. This political climate of the 1980s and 1990s seems to provide the backdrop for the representation of feminism in the mainstream media. Thus *Cosmopolitan's* and *New Woman's* postfeminist discourses and their liberal line can perhaps be seen as the most acceptable version of feminism for the readers and thus for the publishers. Their focus on individualism, freedom of choice and assumed equality of rights and opportunities for women are generally seen as moderate and consistent with the liberal ideology of capitalist democracy.

The British magazines' postfeminist discourses appear to replace political questions with lifestyle questions in which 'choice' appears to be the key word. Yet these lifestyle questions should not necessarily be seen negatively since the magazines attempt to adopt themselves to the changes in popular awareness of feminism. Representing lifestyle choices is not the same as representing feminist politics, but this does not mean that their commitments to social and political changes are necessarily incompatible with some of the objectives of critical feminist perspectives. Some of these include the promotion of self-esteem, equality of opportunity in work, the ending of sexual prejudice and discrimination, and sexual pleasure.

However, what are represented as personal, individual problems could be traced to the status of women living in a male-dominated society. *Cosmopolitan* and *New Woman* then subvert the feminist claim of 'the personal is political' in a way in which a set of political ideas and practices is transformed into a set of personal lifestyle choices. This points to the fact that these women's magazines turn feminist politics into a feminist identity which is defined by a certain appearance, by acquiring a certain type of job, by personality rather than by political practice. Depoliticization of feminism in this way, as bell hooks notes, 'can embrace everyone, since it has no overt political tenets. This 'feminism' turns the movement away from politics back to a version of individual self-help'². In this view, women's magazines and other popular cultural forms, which engage with feminism, such as television programmes or films, provide

² bell hooks, *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*. (New York, Routledge, 1994) p. 98.

women with the resources to practice individualism to different degrees rather than a collective feminist project.

As detailed analysis of the magazines shows, *New Woman's* and *Cosmopolitan's* engagement with feminism certainly fits into this view. It can be identified as 'power feminism' as defined by Wolf: it 'encourages a woman to claim her individual voice rather than merging her voice in a collective identity; is unashamedly sexual; seeks power and uses it responsibly; wants women to acquire money, both for their own dreams and for social change'³. In conclusion, the British magazines suggest individual achievement, personalized goals rather than collective goals and aims for women, and therefore lacks enough determination to challenge the patriarchal order. They do this by locating solutions of male oppression predominantly in the domain of women's subjectivities rather than in the social order.

On the other hand, the Turkish magazines tend to locate solutions of male oppression in the social order. For instance, as discussed under the theme of sex and sexuality, virginity is presented as a social, legal and moral issue by *Kim* and *Kadınca*. In particular, the virginity test has been a common practice in Turkey and has become a significant issue on the feminist agenda. The Turkish magazines strongly criticize the state institutions and policies for allowing such a traumatic practice and for controlling women's bodies in this way. Some other issues, which represent women's subordinate position in society such as domestic violence, rape, inequality in

³ Naomi Wolf, *Fire with Fire: The New Female Power and How It Will Change the 21st Century*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), p.149.

workforce, are also located within the social order rather than individual failure or responsibility. In this respect, it could be argued that unlike the British magazines *Kim* and *Kadınca* try to emphasize political aspects of women's personal lives.

By providing discussions on the woman question and feminist issues in different contexts and from different perspectives, the Turkish magazines in question illustrate their responsibility to inform readers in order to enable them to escape the consequences of women's subordination. Their approach suggests that they search for alternatives instead of an ideal model for Turkish women, and thus espouse contradiction and diversity. This view links them to 'real' women rather than constructing an ideal, mythic woman. Therefore, the Turkish women's magazines' feminism allows them to provide these women with ways of coping with 'real' difficulties, for example, when they face sexual harassment or violence. Consequently, representations of feminist issues in *Kim* and *Kadınca* suggest collective activism as well as individual improvement for a more equal and democratic society. Nevertheless, their high level of engagement with feminist issues does not prevent the Turkish magazines from commodifying femininity. Market constraints are identified as the main reason for this contradictory representation of femininity and feminism.

The main differences between the Turkish and British magazines outlined above have been caused by, as discussed in chapter one, social and cultural dynamics and distinct historical contexts within which the feminist movements emerged in Britain and

Turkey. Socio-political and economic changes occurring in these countries over the last thirty years have provided a backdrop for the development of the feminist thought and inevitably have shaped the needs and expectations of women. The market structure of the women's magazines and market constraints have also produced the differences between the Turkish and British magazines' engagement with feminism.

Bridging the Gaps: Popular Meets the Political

Six dominant themes emerged from the textual analysis of the women's magazines. The way they are articulated differs in various ways between the two countries. For instance, regarding sex and sexuality, feminist thinking filters into the pages of all the women's magazines in question. However, while sexuality is seen as a terrain of self-achievement and pleasure by the British magazines, it is often portrayed by the Turkish magazines as a terrain dominated by masculine values from which women need to liberate themselves. These differences can be seen as reflections of the needs and expectations of women in their own context. The magazines from both countries provide information on sexual health, equality in sexual relationships, contraception and pregnancy tests. In addition, the British magazines and to a lesser extent the Turkish magazines discuss and raise questions about controversial issues such as female desire and sexual pleasure which were under emphasized by the second wave of feminism. 'Where feminism is viewed as moralistic and condemning of young women having fun and enjoying heterosexuality, it is true that magazines adopt a

more provocative tone'⁴. Certain images of feminism represented in the magazines might antagonize some feminists. Yet the provision of diverse versions of the concept of feminism provided through feminist politics and women's magazines allows different groups of women to engage with feminist discourses.

The construction of contemporary femininity in the British women's magazines is predominantly defined through sexuality which provides a frame for female identity. They address a type of woman who seeks advice and information to move independently and successfully in her personal, professional and social life. Self-confidence, assertiveness and determination are emphasized as personal qualities of this woman. These qualities are mostly associated with outlook and being sexually attractive. The Turkish women's magazines also encourage women to have these qualities but in a rather didactic way. The reason partly for their educative tone, for example, with regard to sex is that sexual relationships before marriage are not acceptable in many sections of Turkish society and therefore most young women they address are assumed to be inexperienced and likely to feel guilty.

The magazines' sceptical and critical approach to marriage illustrates again the impact of feminist thought. Their rather strong language challenges and confronts the concerns women's magazines used to promote, for example, marriage and monogamy as a social norm. Nonetheless, regarding marriage and family, the appropriation of feminism has been reduced to the concept of 'freedom of choice' by the British

⁴ Angela McRobbie, 'More!': New Sexualities in Girl's and Women's Magazines' in *Back to Reality: Social Experience and Cultural Studies* (ed.) Angela McRobbie, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 190-209 (p.205).

magazines, and the problems of superwoman, the myth that was created in the last decade in Europe, still occupy the Turkish magazines. (It must be pointed out that only a small space is devoted to this issue in the magazines).

Another area of feminist influence is observed in employment. The engagement of women's magazines with different aspects of female employment and careers creates a space to some extent to question a society still structured around male dominance and also to offer solutions to cope with it. Positive images of women in different fields of employment also provide the reader with role models and a sense of what women can do and achieve.

The women's magazines in question offer a celebration of female culture and validation of 'competencies' attributed to women which help to challenge the dominant modes of 'femininity'. Some of the negative characteristics associated with femininity, i.e. being vulnerable, emotional, are reassigned positive meanings and are used for individual improvements. Celebration of feminine attributes in a positive and productive way shows the influence of feminist thought, in this case the cultural feminist movement, on women's magazines in the redefinition of femininity.

Analysis of the magazines in this study illustrates that the concerns of sex, relationships and emotions are still dominant in the women's magazines in the 1990s but the way in which they deal with these issues, and the contexts provided for them, differ to a large extent from those previous traditional women's magazines.

Discussion of masculinity and reconstruction of the 'New Man' in line with feminist thought appears to be a distinct aspect of women's magazines in the 1990s. The magazines provide men's accounts of themselves about transformation of masculine values and also discuss how men cope with these changes. This emphasizes that (1) not only women have changed but men also have changed, (2) the magazines have acknowledged the need to build bridges and create alliances between men and women, based not so much on fixed identities but on flexible identifications.

As this study has illustrated, the women's magazines under study have popularised many feminist issues. As a result of this, these texts can be seen as valuable materials, which contribute to disseminating feminist issues to a wider group of people, but it should also be realized that this contribution is very limited. Feminism is redefined and reconstructed in these texts either by referring or without referring to the word feminism. Representation of feminism in women's magazines, and generally in the commercial media, is not something more than selective, partial feminist visions. Therefore it would be misleading to see a particular representation of feminism in popular culture as equal to feminist politics and material change. At the same time it would be misleading too if we undervalue what it can do in giving the audience images of strong, capable, active women. The women's magazines offer a version of feminist ideology nevertheless, that suits women's magazines' needs rather than the needs of feminist politics. The staff of the magazines, who identify themselves as feminists, decide what kind of women's experiences and issues would be utilized

through women's magazines to attract readers' interest and to meet financial expectations.

From a business-economic point of view, the primary aim of the existence women's magazines is not, of course, to promote feminist politics. As women's magazines are predominantly part of large multi-media corporations, their primary aim is to increase or maintain the profit of such organizations in order to survive under the present capitalist system. The case of *Kim* and *Kadınca*, both of which ceased publication in the late 1990s, illustrates that the profit maximization aim of the media corporations was not being realized any longer. The reason, according to Asena, is that *Kim* had more political and ideological content vis-à-vis feminism than its rivals. She says 'because of our readership who cared more about the content of the magazine than the glamorous outlook of it. We failed to attract the kind of advertising revenue that funds the publication of glossy magazines. Fashion and beauty advertisements in *Kim* were less than in other women's magazines'⁵. Since the income of women's magazines predominantly depend on advertising revenue rather than on sales, Asena's explanation seems to be the major factor in the closure both magazines. This implies that, commercial interests, the most significant force for the existence of women's magazines, allowed a space for feminism as long as it *sold*.

Besides market rules, disappearance of such magazines can be related to the status of feminism and its representation in the late 1990s in Turkey. While feminist issues

⁵ It is quoted from Duygu Asena's talk on a television programme in November 1999.

occupied a significant space in public discussions since the mid-1980s, and became part of effective political discourses by the mid-1990s, they have recently faded from the political agenda and the public debate. This should neither be understood to mean that we no longer need feminism since it has already transformed the society, nor that feminism has failed as a social and political movement. The feminist movements in Turkey have not produced deep-rooted transformations of the extant laws and the socio-political status quo yet have raised gender consciousness among different groups of society. Consequently feminism has become, to some extent, a reference point in culture over the last decade, mainly through feminist activism and the media. Thus the closure of *Kim* and *Kadınca* marks a shift in the representation of feminism in popular culture as well as a change in the expectations of the readership. While both of the magazines engaged with feminist issues explicitly, as discussed earlier, existing career women's magazines in Turkey tend to incorporate feminist discourses into popular discourses implicitly. Like their counterparts in Britain, these publications tend to appropriate the feminist terminology of self-assertiveness, achievement, liberation with an attempt to expand the commodity-sign values of consumer goods.

Appropriation and articulation of feminisms at different levels and in different ways by the women's magazines as outlined above have inevitably influenced the redefinition of femininity in the 1990s. Recognition of diverse female subjectivities, sometimes complementary, sometimes contradictory, can be seen as a progressive representation of women in popular culture and a challenge to traditional

understanding of femininity. Editors of women's magazines, most of whom are self-proclaimed feminists, play a significant role in the process of redefining and representing femininity and feminism for the 1990s' women. The female professionals who produce the magazines grew up in the context of the 1970s and 1980s feminist debates. Consequently, they tend to possess an awareness of sexual and gender politics which are pro-women. Editors' efforts to negotiate and produce feminist meanings outside the academy not only help make feminist issues part of commonsense and a reference point in culture but also make old binary oppositions about feminism and femininity dissolve. Although the women's magazines never made a statement about such objectives, they have actually become a crucial medium throughout the years, which has enabled a closer link between feminist values and femininity. This unintentional commitment of the women's magazines to feminism resulted in a recognition of diverse female subjectivities and identities and a move away from a fixed and cliché image of woman.

New Directions

The editors' statements about the existence of women's magazines, for example, 'our reason for existing is to be pro-women, to celebrate women' (Appendix A, p.v), suggest a connection between the women's magazines and female solidarity. It definitely means something different from what the feminists, during the Women's Liberation Movement, referred to by the concept of 'sisterhood', yet it could be seen as a productive strategy in the depoliticised context of the 1990s. Inclusion of

interviews with successful or ordinary women who share their experiences and views with the reader (the issues range from sex to rape, from discrimination at work to unequal gender relations), and articles, although limited, on friendships between women could be seen as a form of acknowledging diverse women's shared interests or problems. This may emphasize a postfeminist understanding: the importance of individual self-determination, but at the same time it may emphasize a rejection of the cliché of female competitiveness and an interest in images of women as different facets of identity. The portrayal of women that is increasingly observed in popular culture, particularly in films and advertising (for example, in the context of women-only leisure activities, featuring women sitting together in public places, or driving together), makes this argument relevant for other popular cultural products. This is a crucial development that broadens the study of the field of popular cultural products for feminist critiques in terms of how these postfeminist attitudes should be approached and re-evaluated.

Considering the women's magazines' various ways of engagement with feminist issues, this study points to the need for an extensive analysis of the production process and context of women's magazines as the next area for study in order to examine in detail how feminist and women's issues are negotiated outside the academy. It allows us to identify obstacles that editors and journalists face in relation to dealing with feminist issues and/or other subjects. Another merit of future study is to focus on audience reception. Ethnographic research methods provide tools to examine what sense the reader makes of these texts, how the reader negotiates

controversial and/or complementary feminine/feminist meanings these texts offer, and the various ways the reader uses and appropriates texts to empower herself. Approaching women's magazines from this perspective would allow us to re-conceptualize the relationship between feminism, producers of cultural texts and consumers.

Another productive location in which this study calls for further investigation could be the ironic language used by producers. As my research into women's magazines has shown, sometimes the women's magazines, in particularly *Cosmopolitan* and *Kim*, approach some issues, e.g. masculinity, in an ironic way. Perhaps, as McRobbie argues, 'the irony, the touch of parody, and the refusal of feminine naivety produces a space for greater reflexivity and critique on the part of reader'⁶. The sophisticated use of language allows the magazines and, thus the reader, to deal with 'serious' issues in a more relaxed way and to explore female fantasy, fun and pleasure more freely. For example, as discussed in the textual analysis of the magazines, making fun of masculinity illustrates a way of coping with male dominated society, and furthermore turns the struggle into a somewhat more manageable and easier one to change. It also creates the language of a shared knowingness among a young generation of women which can be seen as crossing the boundaries of the male dominated language. The findings of this study strongly support the argument that the ironic space in magazine discourse can offer possibilities for critical reflection. It draws attention to the future feminist strategies in that the magazines try to encourage their readers, not necessarily

⁶ McRobbie, 1997, p. 188.

consciously, to be critical of the established gender relations, patriarchal institutions, and perhaps capitalism.

This research reveals that the women's magazines in question have found sophisticated ways of adapting feminism for their own purposes. The impact of feminism on the redefinition of femininity for the 1990s' woman, as illustrated in this study, points to the fact that there is a need for a positive feminist perspective and sophisticated feminist analysis in other areas of popular culture to understand the strategies that create mediated visions of feminism and thus femininity. Pro-feminist images represented by the popular media can be seen as a contribution to the feminist struggle, but there is always a need for feminist analysis to keep emphasizing the fact that feminism is a social, political movement with material consequences that makes a commitment to collective action necessary. This may also have effective consequences on women's magazines in the way that collective activism could be realized as a necessary strategy to promote as well as promoting individualized feminist goals.

Many areas articulated in the women's magazines with regard to feminist/postfeminist discourses overlap conceptually with the current feminist status as elaborated in theoretical debates in the British and the Turkish contexts. Popular feminism, which ties together the effects and reflections of feminist, commercial and popular discourses, may stimulate controversy and dissent but it keeps some feminist issues in the media. This suggests two possible productive aspects for feminisms and

for feminists. Firstly, popular feminism helps expand the public sphere where the feminine/feminist meanings are made and circulated. This means providing a broader ground for a variety of voices, rather than limiting what feminism is and what feminism should do to a small group of people such as academics or politicians. In this respect, popular feminism provides a means for increasing diverse voices and understandings of feminisms. Therefore the texts of popular feminism, in the form of the women's magazine, soap opera, film, or advertising, should be seen as progressive since they keep patriarchy under constant interrogation, legitimate feminine/feminist values, and thus produce self-esteem for women. Secondly, if women's magazines and other popular cultural forms help disseminate such issues to a wide range of audiences, and they do, feminists could learn some strategies from women's magazines. Instead of denying the value and function of these products on behalf of feminist politics and (ordinary) women, feminists could establish a strong dialogue with them and work on possibilities of incorporating future feminist politics and strategies into these texts which might help transform the individualistic discourse of women's magazines and work toward an aim of collective activism.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEWS WITH THE EDITORS OF THE WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

COSMOPOLITAN

Linda Wood, Managing Editor, 28th APRIL 1996

How would you define your role as editor within the production process?

My role is to oversee all the different departments. We work as a team. I make sure that we get the magazine out on time and to budget. That sounds easy but it is actually a huge task. Obviously I have all the internal politics of the office as well. So, it is my drive to get people to work as a team and to meet the deadlines.

My main tasks would be to see all the copy that we have commissioned and to make sure that it is processed in the right way. I am very much involved in planning stages. So, we have discussion meetings, for example, we are having a planning meeting next week to talk about the August issue and then we put a flat plan together. I actually create the flat plan, to make sure that run of the features are in the right order and each section of the magazine is right so we get sufficient appropriate articles. So we make sure that we do not get two articles together about 'men' or 'you and your friend'. It has to be very balanced. That's my main role here.

There are 28 of us in the editorial team and everybody helps me with my own tasks. People are mostly relying on the heads of the departments. That would be chief editor, deputy editor, the art director, fashion director: I am relying on those people to run their teams sufficiently and do their section of the magazine and then I co-ordinate from there.

What internal and external factors influence your decisions?

Internally it could be anything. For example, we are having a meeting here and somebody is telling me how brave she had to be to ask her current boy friend out first time, from that we might develop it into a feature. External factors or outside influences could be anything. If we see an interesting case in the newspaper or on TV, we may develop it into a feature.

The staff is totally my responsibility. I hire the staff and I am responsible for the staff in terms of their work and also if they have any problems outside work. I am a bit like an agony aunt in that sense. Each of the departments would come with their ideas and it is really the editor who makes the final decision on what we will have in the magazine in terms of content. So, we all have input into the content of the magazine but it is the editor who makes the final decision. In terms of advertising, I do the flat plan for the magazine, therefore, if I am not happy about a particular ad going against a particular feature I change it so that flow of the editorial looks right. In terms of promotion, I have control over it. If we find the product isn't suitable for *Cosmo* readers for some reason or perhaps positioning of it in the magazine I would influence that. But I wouldn't influence buying pages for products to promote, another department oversees that. Ultimately, it is the publisher who would make the final

decision on those areas. Publishers would have the final say on advertising and promotion.

How would you describe your magazine?

Well, it is the world's best selling young women's magazine, aiming at the age group of 18 to 37, and it covers all aspects of life of women of those ages whether it is relationships, fashion or beauty or promoting being assertive and glamorous and getting the most from your life.

Why are women's magazines produced?

I think they are aspirational. They help women to aspire to make the most of their lives, to improve their lives. Women's magazines give women vast amounts of information whether that is how get on with their career or where to get the latest fashion from. It is all informative. And hopefully it is glamorous and fun.

Do you think they have changed over time? How?

Yes. Because the life has changed. In the 1950s it was unusual for women to work, they were normally the homemaker. But now it has changed and the majority of women do work as well as having children and this is something that has changed over the 1960s and 1970s. When we started the magazine in the early 1970s, *Cosmopolitan* was caught up in these changes. It was aimed at women who could take control of their own lives. The major fact was that women in the 1970s increasingly acquired financial independence whereas previously, in the 1960s they didn't have that. They always relied on men or family to support them financially.

So, in terms of content and discourse magazines have changed.

Well, previously you would have a lot of things like housekeeping and women's weeklies, full of recipes and how to improve things in terms of the home. Because that's what women were involved in. Whereas now the content is much wider. It includes a variety of things, such as work, emotional issues. You know there isn't anything that we wouldn't cover.

What have been most significant social changes affecting women's lives over the last two decades?

More women are now financially independent. I think this is probably the greatest change. I think we have responded to these changes not only in the 1970s and 1980s but still in the 1990s. I do not think we ever stopped influencing women's lives and also reflecting their needs.

People comment that Cosmopolitan was pro-feminist in the 1970s and early 1980s but it has changed. Would you agree with this?

Yes, if we define present Cosmo we would say post-feminist. A lot of the battles have been won. I mean the movement has not finished but the major battles have been won.

How would you define feminism?

Well, it is almost impossible to define because people give the word different definitions. My definition is somebody who believes in equal rights of men and women, and sexes are different but their rights should be equal. We do reflect these ideas in *Cosmopolitan*.

How do you know that what you think is 'right' for the magazine is right?

We know because people keep buying it. If they didn't buy then we would know we got it wrong. We also do a certain amount of market research but not very much. What makes us know we are successful is that we sell more copies than any other young women's magazines. The marketing research department conducts research from time to time. The results are private, not for people to read.

It was launched in March 1972, I think, perhaps you know better. I wasn't working at that time I don't know why that particular year was chosen to launch the magazine.

What kind of audience do you address?

I think the majority of them are single. We have a high proportion of A, B, C readers and any class and any colour.

Cosmopolitan is the leader in the market. We sell the most issues. That's in the young women's market. People who are in the market like *Marie Claire*, *Elle*, *19*, *Company* and we outsell all these magazines.

In what ways do you think Cosmopolitan is different than the rest of the young women's magazines?

It is better of course. It is hard really to answer this question. There are things in our magazine that are covered in other magazines of course. But, say, we might do fashion better than *Marie Claire* but *Elle* might do it better than us. It is not easy to say what we do is the best. Because we are aimed at young women we are similar. What I think we do well, what our reputation stands on, is how we deal with emotional issues. That's probably what makes us different from anybody else. We cover those issues and we cover them in depth. It is the issues that we tackle and the fact that we do in a style that is easily understandable.

Personal information:

I have been working as an editor in *Cosmopolitan* for a year.

I worked in many magazines as a freelance before. I worked as a production editor and news editor.

I am classless. All journalists are. If I left Cosmo I would edit another magazine.

I am 37.

I don't understand what my private life has to do with your interview. It just worries me the sorts of questions you have asked me. You are concerned about class, people being white. I think they are extraordinary and very unprofessional questions to ask. I am surprised. I cannot imagine why they are important for your research.

I'm sorry if I have offended you. But it is important for my research to examine the backgrounds of the editors as well as their role in the production process.

NEW WOMAN

Sam Baker, Deputy Editor, 30th April 1996

What is your role within the production process?

I kind of manage day to day running the magazine. So, I am directly responsible for the production of the magazine. I do things like planning, features commissioning, overseeing layout. I am involved in what goes inside the magazine. I am involved in flat planning of the magazine and commissioning the content, deciding what the visuals would be with the art department, and approving design, these kinds of things. I work with the arts director and the design department, the features' editor, the sub-editors department, the health and the fashion department.

What internal and external factors influence your decisions?

Not really, we don't have much internal or external factors. What goes in the magazine depends on good ideas, what is happening in the news, what is topical, the new products of the year etc. The editors from other departments and I have total control over what goes in the magazine. Regarding content and staff we are completely free. Advertising is a different issue. If we have a good reason we can reject the advertisement, for example, if we don't want the magazine to associate with the product in any way. Then we can turn it down. But it is very rare that that would happen. From promotions point of view, anything that is done to promote the magazine we are involved in it, the decision is made jointly with the marketing department. As regarding advertisement promotions we, the editorial, can turn them if we are not interested in their products.

How would you describe your magazine?

It is a women's magazine and it is aimed at women in the 25 and 35 age group. I would say it takes an intelligent approach to emotional, and particularly women's, issues. We address middle and working class women but not very working class.

Why do you think women's magazines are produced?

All the newspapers have women's pages. I think the intention behind them, certainly our magazine, is to look out for our readers, but also to entertain them. I think it is their territory, it belongs to them.

In what way do you think women's magazines have changed over time?

No, I think the purpose has always been the same: to inform and to entertain. Different magazines have different agendas. Certainly, in the 1950s and the 1960s they had a very different agenda. A lot of women are better off now than women were then. It was not a women's magazine's obligation to liberate women 20-25 years ago as much as it is today.

The main social change is in the field of employment: the primary one is that it is more acceptable recently that women have their own careers and their own lives. On the flip side of that is most families now need both men and women to work. I think we have made a lot of progress, women are more independent, they are a lot better paid, they are a lot more equal, however, women are still paid less than men. They

work longer hours, and have less security. The main change has been economic. Obviously, there has been a sexual and emotional change. But the primary change is the economic change which gives women equality, independence and freedom, but there is still a long way to go for women. However you cannot deny that a lot of progress has been made.

Do you think women's magazines have responded to these changes?

Yes I do think that they have. If you were to pick up an issue of a women's magazine and compare it with one published ten years ago, you would see a remarkable difference. Ten years ago it was argued that women must be able to work and have careers. Right now, I think, we assume that women have those rights.

How would you describe feminism?

Feminism! It is a huge question, in what context?

Your definition of feminism.

I would define it as a woman's right to choose really in that I don't mean about pregnancy or anything like that, in particular I mean about life. I mean very loosely it is about giving women the right to have a choice.

Do you reflect these ideas in your magazine?

Yes I think so. Let me think. I think we try, we don't even have to try. We assume that our readers have rights, that they have those rights, they are in relationships, they meet those rights. If they aren't we will encourage them to change if they can. I mean you have to acknowledge that a lot of women are not in the privileged position that we are. You know we may have a partner who may do the cleaning and look after the kids but the thing is a lot of women don't. And you have to acknowledge this without patronising them. There is a quite difficult balance to work but I think we do.

Do you deal with feminist issues either implicitly or explicitly?

We would not run a four page feature on feminism itself, or say feminism in this country. But I would say that feminism and women's rights are implicit throughout. Maybe because of our culture we don't feel the need and I mean the whole of other issues about Islam and whatever. But, I think in that maybe we feel rightly or wrongly that we don't need explicitly to write about feminism on a regular basis. I think our feminism is evident in it. I mean feminism is a weird word in this country, it is almost a dirty word. It is like 'oh you hate men'. There was a feature done by one of the trade magazines two years ago and they asked all the women's magazines editors if they would describe themselves as feminists and few women would. Because we don't consider feminism as outmoded concept, i.e. old fashion, out of date. I don't think that feminism translates to 'men hating'. I think that feminism is implicit throughout *New Woman*. Our reason for existing is to be pro-women, to celebrate women. I don't think we need to pretend to be *Spare Rib* or anything like that. We are trying, I hope, to help them to make their lives better. And that's the whole reason why women's magazines exist.

In what ways do you help them to make their lives better?

In all ways, they know if something is happening that would affect them. They should know their rights, their emotional existence, their work, their relationships, all of that.

How do you know that what is right for the magazine is 'right'?

There is no right or wrong. It is all subjective! We know what we are doing for the magazine is right and we know what the readers want. The only way we know it is that the readers keep buying it, our circulation is 263.000.

The magazine first published in August, 1988. We were owned by Murdoch. I am not sure but I should think the reason it was launched here was more to do with his business plan.

What kind of audience do you address?

Women in the 25 to 35 age group who are probably in a relationship, probably don't have children but maybe thinking about it, who have jobs, and have their own personal lives outside the home. They are probably intelligent but not very highly educated, probably not like you. Probably in a relation but not married. We do have black readers. We try to remember that. I think we sometimes forget subcultures and it is not certainly our intention. But it happens and we realise that every face in the magazine is white. Every product which has been recommended is for white women. That's a failing. I don't know what the initial policy was in early days of the magazine towards black women. Since I have been here there has been an intention but I don't know if it has been successfully carried through.

Do you undertake any audience research?

Audience research! We do research by placing a questionnaire in the magazine once a year. And every two-three years we do more in depth research on the content of the magazine.

How would you place your magazine within other magazines in the market in Britain?

In the market we are the fourth. We directly compete with, I would say, *Cosmopolitan* and *Option*. Sometimes we cover the same things but we deal with them in a different way. The main difference is about the tone and context rather than the content, and also the environment that exists. We would never do anything that we consider to be anti-women, such as a feature in this month's *Cosmopolitan*. It is about how a woman thinks that her rape incident made her life better. We would never publish anything like that. We would consider it as immoral. It is maybe about the tone, it is about the treatment of emotional issues, women's well being really.

How would you describe your tone? In what way it is different from the others?

Let me try to think about an example. The easy thing to say is we talk to the reader, we say 'you' as a person, as a woman. We don't talk at the reader. We see the magazine as creating a dialogue with the reader.

Personal information:

I have been working here for two years. I have worked as a journalist for six years. I would say my family is working class but inevitably my lifestyle is no longer working class. If I left the magazine I would stay in journalism. I am 29 and I have been married for three years and don't have any children.

KADINCA

Sera Kazancibasi, the editor, 20 March 1996

What is your role within the production process?

I am responsible for the policy of the magazine. I decide the subjects we cover, photographs, colours, page numbers, and campaigns. If a specialist's view is needed on a particular subject I supervise. Usually, we have regular meetings with the team where we discuss the agenda. They make their suggestions, we exchange ideas but I make the final decisions. However, there is only one area, that is promotion which is decided by the owner of the publishing company. My view should also be taken into consideration for the promotion as it must be an appropriate product for the readers. Sometimes I know that they are not appropriate (such as napkins) and it gives bad and wrong images about the magazine. I cannot control this because of the financial crisis in the company. Therefore, the boss often decides the ads and promotions. We don't often have promotions and I prefer not to have anyway.

As I said, we are part of a small publishing company, we go through financial problems sometimes. Like many other women's magazines we do not have a daily newspaper or a TV channel behind us. So, it becomes difficult in terms of having a preference for promotion products. The advertising sector also works parallel to this. Because other women's magazines, our rivals, belong to bigger media corporations, they have more chance to advertise the products, not only in the magazine but also in their TV channels or dailies, therefore producers prefer them. As a result of this, our boss accepts what is offered from the producers to promote. We are part of Nokta Yayincilik Corporation. Interpress publishing company bought the magazine for two years.

My main task is to edit the articles my colleagues write, to give them titles, to choose the photographs, in short, I do the flat plan. It includes issues such as news, commissioning articles, headlines, new sections if there is a need, page design, cover page. We are five in the office (editor, deputy editor, production editor, photographer and journalist). We usually share the work and help each other. Our roles are flexible not fixed. We all have journalistic background. We discuss and share our ideas, but I make the final decision in the production process.

What are the internal and external factors:

There could be some external factors. For instance, if the fundamentalist party came to power our policies would have to change. Social and political changes would affect the content. Or, environment has become a social issue in Turkey recently. In order to raise women's consciousness about these issues and make them feel sensitive and

active we have begun an environment section. It has affected our content in a positive way. Unlike other women's magazines we have a sport section. It was partly my interest but also we were not happy that sport was represented in the media as only men's territory. Women are usually ignored who have been successful in different areas of sports. So, we have begun a sports section as well. The other factor is the market. We have to compete with several magazines. We research what kinds of issues our rivals include or exclude, so, their policies and content would be influential on our magazine. For example, we discovered that we didn't have a shopping section where products were displayed and introduced like most other magazines had. Then we began a new section. As an internal factor, I could say that the price of paper may affect the number of pages but not the content.

What kind of audience do you address?

Middle class, over the age of 22. These women are sensitive to women's problems as women and also conscious of the women's movement in Turkey. Some of them are trying to find their identity as women and some others might know who they are, what they do but care about the problems in general that women face. For instance, women's employment, women's participation in politics. In addition they are the women who do exercise, take care of their body, and work outside the home. Approximately 35% of the readers are employed, 10% are students and the rest are housewives. Our main readers are from the big cities but we also attract some women readers from different parts of the country who are looking for help to tackle their problems stemming from being a woman. Our readership reflects the identity of Turkish women. *Kadinca* sells in Europe, to Turkish immigrants. When we write we always keep in mind the needs of Turkish women. There are issues to do with sex, but what we are trying to do is not only to tell them what they should do, but to inform them what they could do or where they can get help when they have certain problems, say, about sex and health.

What would you say about the tone of the magazine?

First of all we suggest women stand on their own feet, know their rights, get educated, work and also get involved in democratic, non-governmental organisations, politics and so on. In other words, we offer an identity for women who fight for their rights, who refuse to stay at home and do nothing. This is how women can control their lives. This aspect of the magazine is concerned with the women's status and their role in society. The other aspect is women's personal lives, their emotions and feelings. We assume an image of woman who is confident, for example about her body, happy about herself, and perhaps most importantly who believes love is very important.

Women like men should be able to do what they wish to do. But I do not mean that women should try to behave in streets the way men do. Women should be able to play an active role in the public sphere and in politics. So, our perspective is quite wide. We do not say women must get married or women must live with their lovers. If there are women who choose to cohabit or have a baby outside wedlock we encourage all of them in our magazine. So, we do not condemn anything women choose to do. Our aim is to make them aware of their rights. If they are married and want to get a divorce we offer advice and information to tackle these problems.

We do not create a role model or a fixed identity for women in Turkey. If they are housewives we encourage them to get part-time work or make them conscious about their responsibilities for society as well as for children and husbands. Society expects something from each individual, men and women. As I said, our view on these matters is wide. The main thing is to help women to discover their identity and their strength, and to help them feel strong in any condition and in any environment. Our aim is to encourage women to get educated, to stand independently, and furthermore to make all people aware in society that these issues are important for women. We primarily aim to raise women's consciousness and help women activists to change certain articles in the Family Law which are in favour of men. Especially the articles which cause major obstacles in overcoming gender discrimination and inequalities in public and private matters. In short, we have a diverse readership and we deal with diverse issues and contradictions women may have. I do not want to fit myself into any isms, such as eclecticism or pluralism.

How would you describe feminism?

There are different views of feminism. My understanding of feminism is that it is a women's struggle to gain their rights. Not only women, but if men are sensitive to feminist issues they could also be feminist as well. Radical feminists argued extremely in the 1980s against the traditional values that caused negative perception of feminism among the conservative people. I am a feminist but I do not wish to call myself a socialist feminist or a liberal feminist. Because I share certain things with each group. Because there are different personalities, different views within one discourse which I do not want to associate or identify myself with. Perhaps I could say my view is closer to liberal feminists. I would say I believe in women's rights not different isms.

I certainly reflect my views in the magazine. My understanding of feminism shapes the magazine. We do not have radical policies therefore we have not experienced any pressure from the owner.

What do you think women's magazines do for women?

Some of them help women discover their identity, find out things about their internal lives. For instance, their sexual lives, health, their body problems, how to be beautiful, to take care of their bodies. Some magazines, like *Cosmopolitan*, offer women a hope and a desire how to be beautiful like stars. However, in our magazine we do not show the notion of beauty as something to desire but we use it as a visual material. Some of them give women, more traditional magazines, tips in order to make daily life more exciting for them and for their husbands, for instance, to prepare surprises for their husbands. This type of magazines address mostly housewives whose happiness depends on someone else, i.e. their husbands and children. These magazines sell well, because the majority of Turkish women are isolated from politics, labour, sports and the number of women who read dailies is rather low. These women's main problems and concerns are with themselves, with their husbands and children, with domestic duties or with their bodies. Yet there are women's magazines like *Kadinca* and *Kim* which play an important role to close this gap for women between their private lives and outside world. These magazines not

only offer knowledge about women's personal lives but also try to make women conscious that there are more things to do in one's life than domestic duties. We give such messages, for instance, that if you face domestic violence or sexual abuse you must not accept them as your destiny, you are a human being like a man. It is not natural or normal to experience these things. In short, *Kadinca* offers a light for those who live in the dark, in difficult conditions that stem from being a woman. It teaches women to be happy with themselves, to love themselves and to be aware of their rights.

In which way has Kadinca changed over time?

It has been published for 18 years now. The management in terms of editorial has changed three times. The first is Duygu Asena period, Tülin Kolukisoglu period (three years) then our period. *Kadinca* was launched when the new feminist movement started to emerge. *Kadinca* contributed to the development of the movement immensely and we can say that Duygu Asena's role was significant. Until 1984, *Kadinca* looked like rather a traditional women's magazine. *Kadinca* had gradually established its feminist line alongside the feminist movement. All the staff were feminist activists. *Kadinca* was significant in the early 1980s in the sense that it enabled women for the first time to get together around a publication and to fight for their rights, to fight against the dominant patriarchal order. Before that women used to be organised in small groups in associations or foundations. In those days, what feminism meant to women was to be equal to men. The notion of equality led women to protest in the streets and to enter men's public spheres. So, these activities gave feminism a wrong image thus the society perceived it as a movement which meant women should be able to act like a man in the public sphere: walk outside in the evening or drink in bars like men and so on. Then the second period started with a new editorial team, I was one of the new staff then. During this time *Kadinca*'s discourse changed and did not follow the previous feminist line established by Asena. It became a more serious magazine, I mean it became depoliticised and avoided any issues concerned with women's movement. When Duygu Asena and her staff left the circulation of the magazine dropped immediately. It was selling around 18.000 then. The circulation dropped to 9.000 during the new management. The reason of this dramatic decrease in circulation is that *Kadinca* distanced itself from the women's NGOs and the women's movement in general. Anything appeared as news was quite different from the previous established identity of *Kadinca*. It went on like this until the mid-1993. Then my staff and I took it over.

We have introduced the following changes: During the Asena period *Kadinca* established a radical feminist line. It was perceived by uneducated and by anti-feminists that it was a radical magazine. We attempted to soften this image of *Kadinca*. We didn't want to give an impression to the readers that *Kadinca* is against men, feminists are men haters etc. Our aim was to attract attention to women's problems not only by women but also by men. We believe that women's problems do not only concern women, but also men. They must look for solutions together. For that reason, for the first time, we started using images of men and women on the cover page. So, this was the first change we have introduced. Then we introduced the sports page and the environment page. We also started pink pages where we deal with

issues concerning the women's movement, women's NGOs and any activities to do with women's rights. We include news from all over the country. We use experts for issues such as sex and health. Rather than translating articles into Turkish we prefer to address the needs of Turkish women on these issues. These changes had a positive impact on the circulation: before we started it was around 9000 then soon after it had increased to 14000. Because of the economic crisis in 1994 we couldn't publish the magazine for two months. During that time many magazines went into bankruptcy. As a result of this crisis our circulation had dropped. Today *Kadinca* sells around 10,000.

The content of the magazine depends on the social changes that take place in society as well as the editor's view. When we took over we tried to change the earlier radical image of the magazine. We believe that problems should be solved in a democratic way by including both sexes. We cannot achieve our aims by excluding men from our struggle, rather we should take educated men on our side and make them aware of women's problems and ask for their help. Because it is difficult to make changes in law as the parliament is dominated by men. So, we, both women and men, should work together to produce solutions to the problems.

How do you know that what you think is 'right' for the magazine is right? I do not often see articles dealing with homosexuality or birth control. Why?

Homosexuality or lesbianism are the only issues we are told not to deal with in our magazine. Once we published an article about lesbianism and we received a negative reaction from our boss. We are not allowed to. My personal view is that we should include such issues in our magazine since there are people in Turkey who have different sexual experiences and problems some of which may overlap with women's problems. We occasionally offer information about contraceptives.

We follow the current issues then decide what to include on our agenda. For instance, when the fundamentalist municipalities closed the ballet school we made news about it. Or when we receive news such as 'a school master takes female students to virginity control', we include it in our issue as it concerns women's status in society and the oppression of female sexuality. Then there are regulars. There must be two-three articles about sex life, relationships, interviews with celebrities and so on. We try not to repeat ourselves and also try to be different from our rivals. The cover page is very important. There are certain periods for appropriate topics for the cover page. For instance, summer is soon, this means it is the time to go on a diet, therefore our cover page of March is about diet. Or we choose to use astrology in December and January.

We do not do reader surveys. A survey was carried out years ago. However, readers' letters are very significant for us. In a way they determine what to cover and focus on. For example, we had a readers' page in which readers' short letters about their intimate relationships were published for a while. Then we discovered that our readers are not very interested in that, we started to receive less and less letters for that page. Then we stopped it. On the other hand we have received so many letters for the Leyla Alaton page about women and employment, or for astrology. So, this meant

that these pages or issues were the right things for our readers and we've kept them. We receive phone calls from readers who request something on certain subjects. We take their request into consideration and offer more detailed information in the next issue. We do not have readers survey but readers responses help us to rearrange subjects and contents of the magazine.

What are the main differences between Kim and Kadinca?

Kim has a discourse that is rather sarcastic. Their experience in this field is much more than us. My staff and I have journalistic backgrounds. It is perhaps their background that they tend to make fun of the things, they mock men. For instance, in the 1980s they were radical and they wrote serious articles against men, patriarchy and so on. But now, it seems they do not take things seriously but instead make fun of them. On the other hand, we try to do more research and we report them in such a way that readers will improve their knowledge on a certain subject and make, hopefully, use of it for themselves in their daily lives. We have a clear idea about who our readers are, what they expect from us. Whereas *Kim* has not established an identifiable readership, so *Kim* has no clear identity as a magazine. They are struggling between being a feminist and teenager magazine. Apart from this we do not have many differences. Their previous radical discourse, to some extent, has been swept away. I think they are not radical any more. I am not sure if we can identify it as a feminist magazine, perhaps it is a magazine that offers extreme, strange ideas to teenagers. What I mean is that they have an identity problem.

Personal information:

I started here in 1992 and became the editor in 1993. I worked as a journalist before I moved here. I am middle class like the readers we address. If I leave my job one day I would like to work as a journalist again. Because I'd like to be more active in terms of gathering news. It could be a daily or weekly newspaper. I want to be dealing with women's issues, health, sports, environment plus politics if I work in a daily or weekly publication in the future.

I got divorced four years ago. We lived together for seven years and stayed married three years. I have moved in my career faster since I got divorced. I do not recommend marriage but, of course, this is my experience. I think a woman should first be doing things for herself in order to stand up independently, then should get married around the age of thirties if she wishes to.

KIM

Duygu Asena, the editor - 27 March 1996

What is your role as an editor?

As you know *Kim* is an extension of *Kadinca*. My staff and I had run *Kadinca* for several years then moved here. So, we have been working in this field for nineteen years. My role as an editor is to prove the subjects and news my colleagues have gathered, to add more things if necessary, and to suggest new subjects. Although it is not the editor's job but I do read the whole magazine before it gets published. I also give the titles of the articles, design the pages, and write an editorial every month. Except advertisements, I am responsible for everything. I have the final word for everything. We have in our company a general director for all commercials. They choose them but if they choose something that could be against the identity of the magazine such as materials that are sexist or reinforce religious values then I have a say.

I am editing two magazines; *Kim* and *Negatif* which is a culture and art magazine. There are deputy editors below me. They co-ordinate between them, the art director and the journalists. In the case of my absence they make decisions. There are also photographers.

There is a general director who is responsible for all the magazines, 16 magazines are published by our mother company Milliyet. But we do not have an internal influence. We are an old and experienced group. When we moved here, one of the conditions we asked was that they would not intervene in the policy of the magazine. So we do not have external influences.

I am free in making the publication decisions for the magazine. However, I must point out that economically we depend on the company. If I want to spend a large amount of money I ask the general director. Thus this affects the promotional materials. I usually suggest what we should promote but sometimes financially it may not be appropriate for the company then they choose to promote something else.

What kind of audience do you address?

Kim addresses women who are interested in various aspects of life and take or want to take an active role in life. I mean the *Kim*'s reader is interested in going to the cinema, reading, working or willing to work. So, in one way or the other she participates in social life or may want to do so. Therefore we always report current political issues, of course, developments in the women's movement, at the same time we offer knowledge about beauty and health. She is someone who is young, who wants to learn something more about herself and about life, who takes certain things serious and pursues achievements in life. Our readers are middle class people who decide to buy the magazine themselves. Furthermore they earn money and stand independently. Although the age of our readership varies from university students to middle-age, the majority of them are between 20 and 30.

The discourse of the magazine is pluralistic. This is something that we are sometimes criticised for. But it is important for me that we address diverse audiences, that the magazine is popular and is talked about. Because our audience is diverse we cover a variety of issues from different perspectives.

Why do you think women's magazines exist?

First of all there is the commercial reason. It is very profitable. They earn money through commercials. I do not think that publishers produce them for the sake of helping society or women. There are so many women's magazines around the world as the profit is high. Because women are a very good consumer group, publishers earn lots of money through advertising. This aspect of the magazine doesn't concern me. Women's magazines are produced mainly for women to pass time and to have fun. They are enjoyable and easy to read. However, my concerns for women's magazines have always been to teach woman something about herself and about the society we live in. My aim is to make them think and question the things they confront in this dominant patriarchal culture. Along with the light and fun subjects, we report serious issues. I always want them to be able to say 'actually this is not it or this is it'. And I believe I have achieved it. But you might say there is also fashion and other stuff in the magazine, yes because it wouldn't sell without them. Anyway the importance of these subjects for women such as beauty, health, aesthetic cannot be denied. These are good things.

Why was Kim launched?

Kadinca had changed hands three times and I did not get on well with the last owner of the magazine. A group of bank holding bought the company and we did not speak the same language. It was impossible to communicate. Our move to another company to set up this magazine happened for that basic reason. All my team moved here with me.

What are the differences and similarities between Kim and Kadinca?

There are more similarities than differences as the same team now is producing *Kim*. The difference is that *Kim* addresses a younger readership. It could be more brave than other magazines. We have left certain things behind which were, at some points in the 1980s, were difficult to talk about. It was rather difficult to raise certain issues then. We are more experienced now, we are getting older along with this business in this field. Perhaps we are getting softer. In the 1980s our discourse was rather radical. We were aggressive, daring and opposing the established male values. If we were as radical as the 1980s, it wouldn't interest people now. The public paid attention to our feminists attitudes and ideas in the 1980s. People have already learned and discussed the issues we had raised in our radical movement. Now we tend to be softer and more educative.

In a way we are trying to change the society, perhaps without realising it, the magazine is changing as well. We have tried to reflect in our magazine all the social changes affecting women. We have a section which deals with men in a funny way. We thought there was a need for this as our discourse is becoming softer than the previous years. In the past, we used to treat these issues (traditional men's attitudes

towards women) seriously and discuss them seriously. For example, we used to give the message and tell men that 'you are a pig, you do not know how to make love, how to please a woman' and so on. Now we assume that they have learned something and realised that it wasn't right to behave in that way. Therefore, we treat them in a sarcastic way and make fun of them rather than attacking them. This is a rather new discourse and I think young people like it.

How would you define feminism?

Feminism is a movement which means women's struggle to gain rights. When I got involved in the movement years ago I did not call myself a feminist. I discovered the concept 'feminism' twenty-five years ago, then people started to call me 'feminist'. I am not interested in categories or isms. When you look at the definition of the concept in dictionary it defines it as 'a movement which claims women's rights and equality'. In this sense I am a feminist. But as you know there has been a propaganda against feminism in Turkey. Women hesitated to identify themselves as feminists. The main reason for this was that the media representation of feminists created negative views about feminism in public. Journalists had some prejudices against feminists and their writings were biased. They drew a picture of feminists who were ugly, not sympathetic and couldn't find men, and who therefore become anti-men. They behaved in this way because they thought as if feminists were coming and taking over their jobs and careers and this meant sharing their power with women. They were worried about losing their power. They understood it as if women were claiming superiority over men. Because of this misunderstanding many women are still saying that 'don't misunderstand me I am not a feminist but a supporter of women's rights'. For me, if you are a supporter of women's rights you are a feminist.

To what extent has the radical movement in the 1980s affected this very understanding of feminism in society?

Of course, some of the radicals had been influential on the public perception of the movement. But their line of feminism was different than mine or *Kadinca*. This became clear after *Kadinca* had already established its feminist line. I am not against it, these radical activists opened a space for women to be able to discuss and talk about the issues that they found important for women's liberation. For example, 'mor igne' -purple needle- campaign against domestic violence began. People thought those activists would use the needles but it was only a symbol. Then radical activists tried to enter men's social places such as bars and traditional Turkish restaurants to show that those places did not only belong to men. The press had reported events in a biased way and sad things like 'women raid men's places'. So, it was misrepresented in the media, thus, women's intention was misunderstood by the public. I never took part in those activities.

But you were at the Kumkapi dinner.

Yes. My friends and I had a dinner that night in Kumkapi, where the incident took place. We wanted to protest against the dominant belief that women should not go out in the evening. Unfortunately we have not been successful, only a small number of people came and supported us. They hesitated, perhaps they did not want to be identified as feminists. Because supporting the girl who became a victim in this

incident (who killed a man with a knife to defend her sister and her mother from a drunken man's sexual abuse) means refusing established family, male values that subordinate women. Our action became news in the following days and we kept this issue alive in the media.

What has changed since the last decade. Why do you think the so-called 'street feminism' is no longer seen as an effective feminist activism?

I think what is happening in the 1990s is more realistic. Street feminism has been left behind, now feminism has been institutionalised. There are women's centres and programmes set up within the universities, a Women's library has been launched in Istanbul. As I have said it is a more realistic way of fighting with patriarchal institutions and norms. It was inevitable to have the first stage then the second one. I must admit that I am very happy that I have contributed to the first stage of the feminist movement in the 1980s.

What would you say about feminism in the 1990s in Turkey?

People are more conscious about it and the movement has become softer. I find that women are more aware of what is going on and are wiser. They do not attack men and patriarchal institutions any longer, they talk and discuss how to deal with women's subordination.

How has Kadinca contributed to this process of consciousness raising?

We have always given the message that women should be able to stand on their own feet and we'll continue to do so. What we mean, for example, we advise not to see marriage as a guarantee or as a security for the rest of your life. Do things for yourself which will enable you to stand independently, then get married -if you wish to- to someone who you love. My main message in my books is also this: 'Be free and if you want run away from the male dominant environments -marriage and family- do so'. The very words 'run away' frustrated people a lot when my first book came out. Many people were opposed to the idea and criticised my message by emphasising the fact that marriage is the core institution of our society. I do not understand how women survive in their marriages if they do not want to be together with the other person, if they are abused or treated badly. Thus, women should educate themselves, work and earn money, if they are unhappy and suppressed by their husbands or fathers they must be able to leave the environment they do not want to live in.

Because family values have been strictly defined within this culture nobody can really dare criticising those values as it is seen as a threat to the family structure and thus the society. That's why my first book was sensational. But now everybody is talking about it.

The feminist movement had not been reported enough and/or in a positive way in the media in the last decade. We were left alone a little bit. Despite this negative environment, *Kadinca* managed to exist as a consciousness raising source for women and it has helped to create a space for women in the political arena of Turkey since the early 1980s. Then it reached its peak with my first book. The first edition was published in 1987 and called '*Kadinin Adi Yok*' -*Woman Has No Name*-. This book is

still the best seller in Greece among the foreign writers. It has been the best seller in Turkey for a long time. The 154th edition is out at the moment which is an unusual number for the Turkish market. This shows that there was and still is a need in society for women to educate themselves concerning gender issues.

My recent book called '*Nothing has changed*' has been sold not only in bookshops but also in supermarkets, newsagents. Our mother company Milliyet newspaper published it, thus it did not cost much as the company offered a lower price in order to reach as many people as possible in the country. In the first two months it sold 160.000. It is a collection of my writings from *Kadinca*.

Do you reflect your ideas regarding feminism in the magazine?

I am totally free in terms of reflecting my thoughts, ideas about feminism in the magazine. It was hard at the beginning to decide what was right for *Kadinca* when I started there. I was employed when the first issue of *Kadinca* was due. They had already prepared the content and the style. It was a typical women's and fashion magazine addressed to housewives. I gradually started introducing feminist issues in the magazine. Yet my boss was not happy about it at the beginning. His concerns were about the market, he thought it wouldn't sell. He showed me examples from the western magazines, and explained how much a fashion magazine had sold and how much a feminist magazine had sold.

What happened was the first two issues (the way they organised the magazine) didn't sell well. As soon as I introduced issues dealing with the women's movement its circulation increased. In 1980, within a year, we had our place in the market and it was selling well. Because the important thing for the boss was achieving a high circulation and earning money he let me carry on with what I was doing. This was before the military intervention. After that it became a risk and difficult to make the right decision, fortunately it proved that we did the right thing. After having struggled during that unstable political period, it had become easier to decide what to include and how to run it.

During the military intervention for three years and in the following years *Kadinca* maintained its high circulation. This unpleasant political situation actually worked in favour of our ideology and the success of the magazine. While this period had depoliticised the whole society, we were producing policies, we were active. In a way the women's movement was gradually changing the society. They let women take actions for women's rights, women began to march in the streets, made speeches in the public areas and so on. But this political activism, issues concerning women's rights were not taken seriously by the government. The government hadn't intervened into the women's movement's activists until my first book was published. The government banned it for two years in 1988 after it had been selling for a year. They claimed that 'it was immoral and harmful for children'. Their explanation was that 'it was against the Turkish family values and it insulted the marriage institution'. I asked to cover it with a bag and write on it 'it is bad for children' to be able to put it back on bookshop shelves again. I didn't, of course, accept it. In 1990 I took the case to the court and won it.

I started my career in the women's magazine sector in 1979 with *Kadinca*. Before that, from 1972 to 1975, I was working as a columnist in a daily, in *Kelebek*. I was writing about my experiences as a woman. Then I worked in an advertisement company as a script writer until I got the job in *Kadinca*. If I left the magazine one day I would want to work as a columnist in a daily again. And most importantly, I want to carry on writing novels. I have another book project. I may leave my job at any time because there are no surprises in this field for me any more. In other words, it doesn't excite me any longer. I have been working as an editor in many different magazines, such as teenage, cookery, decoration, and the most recently culture and art magazines. I like the last one very much. I feel I must leave my place to younger people and continue writing. But the fact is that I am earning money for doing this job.

There are different approaches to feminism. Which one do you feel yourself closer to or which one do you associate yourself with?

I would say my ideas are closer to 'equality' feminism. Their discourse is softer.

But your image among the public is very much as a radical feminist.

It could be. But I do not see feminism as the most important fact of this world.

Could you explain what you mean by 'equality feminism'? Many people call themselves so, for instance, Necla Arat, and as far as I see your understanding of the concept is different than Arat's.

Equality in the eye of the law. There is enormous gender discrimination in the Turkish Law, especially, in the family law and the criminal law. If and when we manage to change these laws then we need also equality in social life, in sexuality, in family, and in general in everyday life. I mean the word 'equality' should be inscribed to people's minds. As you rightly pointed out that there are differences between me and, say, Necla Arat. They are moralists. They argue for gender equality in a restricted meaning, they believe in it as long as it fits into the norms set by the dominant ideology and the state policies.

Women NGOs are putting lots of pressures on the government at the moment, especially, regarding the changes in the family law. Let's imagine that all the amendments have been done in the legal system that have caused gender discrimination. Then what would you add to your equality argument? In a way nothing will change immediately and yet it will be a big step. For example, a woman wouldn't be left outside the door with nothing when she got divorced. It would enable women to claim equality in social relations and in all aspects of life and choices. Furthermore it would give women freedom of sexuality.

What are the issues on the feminist agenda in Turkey this year?

I think the first one is to make changes in the family law. 100.000 signatures were collected during the petition campaign against domestic violence a few years ago and they are still kept in the parliament quietly. No action has been taken by the government. This campaign has been a great achievement on behalf of women in Turkey in terms of participation. The other issue is the virginity test. But there is no

efficient organisation among feminists to deal with such issues. We deal with these issues in our magazine. In our recent issue, for instance, there is an article criticising the law which defines man as the head of the family. Another article is about women's shelters. We also deal with other inequalities in society that disregard women's rights, for instance, retired women's children are not be entitled to have social security, children can only be registered to their fathers' social security. I think this is terrible. We also raise issues about other social inequalities regardless of gender, i.e. torture in Turkish prisons. There is no single women's magazine that deals with such an issue.

There is a section titled 'Cadica' - 'witch like'. Why was this section named so?

It sounds 'womanly'. When we left *Kadinca* we were a bit lost. We wanted to connote a positive meaning and a positive image to the notion of 'witch', that is something nice and not threatening. It was also a strategy to attract an interest. I suggested the name 'Kim' (direct translation of the word *Kim* is 'who'). I wanted to give the impression that *Kim* as a magazine questions women's identity. In our advertising campaign we used the following slogan: 'Do you know who you are? You are also a *Kim*'.

You have a special men's section where you seem to use a quite ironic language. Do you receive any negative responses to this section?

No, but if we had had it in the past, we would have received negative responses. The public now got used to our sense of humour. They don't get angry any more. We target young readers, they like funny things like that. We didn't have male readership in the past but now we do.

We receive a lot of letters from the readers. They write to me and ask for help concerning different aspects of their lives as well as for job possibilities and money. Money!!!. They expect that, perhaps because of my personality and my work ethic, I am obliged to help women in any sense. I am surprised that they do it so comfortably. One of them asked for a billion Turkish Lira recently. She thinks it is a normal thing to ask for such an amount of money from me. She says 'you will save my life, please give me the amount of money'. I have given money to some women a few times.

It is interesting that you have such an image among women.

Yes. They believe in me and trust me so much that they think I would do anything for the sake of 'women's rights' to save women, then its bill becomes a billion TL. Some of them come here and ask for advice about their private lives and tell me their secrets that they wouldn't tell anyone else. They talk about very sensitive issues such as virginity, divorce or adultery. I find it very difficult to say something, because if anything goes wrong I am the person to be blamed. I get very depressed sometimes but I keep listening to them and the funny thing is that when they are leaving they say 'ohh I am more relaxed now, I feel much better'. But they leave me with stress. It is like being a psychiatrist. I am a very interesting journalist.

Are there any subjects that you wouldn't write about, such as contraceptives or homosexuality?

We occasionally write about contraceptives and AIDS. I was informed recently that AIDS is becoming an increasingly big problem in Turkey. We are planning to write more about these issues and make people aware of the problems and solutions. Male contraception is not at all common among Turkish men. They think that nothing would or could happen to them. They take it as an insult if someone talks about male contraceptive. They need to be educated on this issue. We did a small survey within this publishing company, where many young and educated men work, and asked the male staff if they have ever used contraception and none of them said 'yes'. I think it is pathetic.

What social changes have affected women's lives since the 1980s in Turkey?

The liberal economic and the open market policies of the 1980s' government caused changes in the country in a better way and created more possibilities for people to work. Since the last decade, employment, working outside the home has become an important issue for women. The number of female academics has increased. The divorce rate has also increased. I think it is a positive development, because women are no longer stuck within unwanted marriage relationships. There have been amendments in legal system in favour of women. Women have learned to say 'no'. These developments occurred as women's problems started to be discussed in different sections of society. Now women are talking about issues that they used to keep silent on, perhaps they were shy, hesitated or afraid. Women began to respond gender inequalities in the 1980s. For example, a law was passed in the beginning of the 1990s which reduced the punishment for men who have raped a prostitute. The women's activists put pressure on the government and soon after this law was abandoned. The law which said 'women can work only if their husbands permit' was also abandoned through the efforts of the women's groups.

I was the person who suggested to the head of the Istanbul municipality, Nurettin Sözen, that he should support and open women's shelters. When I approached him he said that such an idea was unfamiliar to him but he promised to open one. He kept his promise and I was invited by Sözen for the opening ceremony of the first women's shelter. The women's movement has become institutionalised over the years.

Kim's circulation is around 15.000.000, less than *Kadınca's* circulation in the 1980s. When I was the editor of *Kadınca* during the 1980s, the circulation increased to 75.000.000, but currently there is no magazine with such a high circulation. The reason could be the economic restrictions and also the number of magazines available.

I am in my mid-forties and single.

Interview Form:

The editorial role and work orientation

1. How would you define your role as editor within the production process?
2. What are your main tasks?
3. What sort of people help you with them and what is their position?
4. What internal and external factors influence your decisions?
5. How free are you to make and implement decisions in the area of content, staff, advertisements, promotion?

The role of women's magazines and audience perception

1. How would you describe your magazine?
2. Why are women's magazines produced?
3. What do you think they do for women?
4. Has it changed over time?
5. What have been most significant social changes affecting women's lives over the last two decades?
6. Have women's magazines responded to those changes? How and what about your magazine?
7. How would you describe feminism?
8. Do you reflect any of these ideas in your magazine? If not why?
9. How do you know that what you think is 'right' for the magazine is right?
10. When was the magazine first published? Why do you think that that specific year was chosen?
11. What kind of audience do you address?
12. What do you think of audience research? Do you use it?
13. What are the main differences and similarities between the your magazine and other magazines in the market? In what ways do you think your magazine differs from the rest of the women's magazines?

Personal background

1. How long have you been working as an editor?
2. What kind of jobs have you done before?
3. How would you describe yourself in class terms?
4. What do you like to do when you are not editing?
5. Age:
6. Marital status:

APPENDIX B

**KADICA**

HAZIRLAYAN: SERPİL BOĞA-ŞAHİDE YAZICIOĞLU

**"KADIN KOLLARI"
AÇILIYOR!**



 YALNIZ YAŞIYORSAN
VE KADINSAŖ...

 TÜRKİYE'DEN
"BARİŞ TREŖİ" GEÇTİ

 AÇIK GIYERSEN
ÖLEBİLİRSİNİ

 GÜZALTINDA
TECAVÜZİ


 NORMA DAVASINI
TERK ETTİ

 SOYADIMIZ
HÂLÂ YASAK!

Kim, September, 1995

Sometimes, the most traumatic events can have unexpectedly positive consequences. They force us to take stock of life, to move on and grow. Two years ago, Alice* was brutally raped. But, instead of allowing this harrowing experience to scar her, she used it to transform her life. Here is her amazing story. As told to LORNA

COSMO EXCLUSIVE



"I was raped and it changed my life — for the better"

One young woman's incredible triumph over tragedy

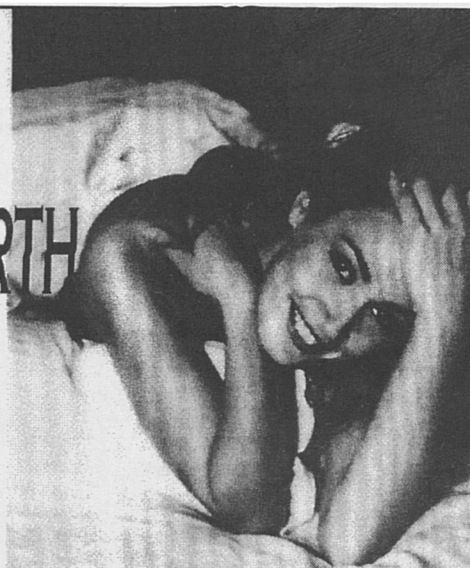
Not even it will be two years since I was raped. I sat I take the day off and let myself cry as I relive the events of that night — and think about how far I've come since then.

It happened on a cold Saturday night in early spring. A gay male friend had invited me on a big night out. I couldn't resist it. So there I was at a club I knew very well, in an area I was familiar with. I felt good — drinking, dancing, having a laugh. And, as I was in a gay club, I thought I could get drunk

*Name changed

I'm not RITA HAYWORTH

...And happy to be me
And with the new Lux range,
there's always something just right
for me... whatever my mood,
whatever my needs. I can choose
from a range of sensations in
shower gels, foam baths, beauty
oils and liquid soaps. Whether
it's soothing relaxation, renewed
vitality, or beautiful refreshment
the choice is mine. Each leaves
my skin feeling beautiful, so I
feel beautiful. And can't imagine
wanting to be anyone else.



I am ME.



NEW **Lux** RANGE. BRING OUT THE STAR IN YOU.


STYLE

Ege Seramik, yalnızca ülkemizin değil, dünya insanların da "Style"ı olduğu sürece.

(') "Buha ilk görüşte kanımın tuttuğunu hissettim."

Mar Flores
Isaaya

EGESERAMİK
"Dünya Düşüncesi"



**MODA
DÜNYASINDA
TOPPER**

Topper, 10. kuruluş yıldönümünde 95 yaz sezonuna yine iddialı girdi. Kadını olduğundan genç, dinamik, çocuksu gösterecek birbirinden şık 735 model hazırladı. Miniler, uçuşan uzun tül elbiseler, jampır tipi elbiseler, dantel gömlekler ve tişörtlerin hepsi Avrupa kumaşlardan hazırlanmış.

An advertisement which has Lesbian connotation,
Kadınca, July, 1995



Kim, February, 1995

APPENDIX C

Table 1: Cover Prices of Some of the Women's Magazines in 1997 in the UK

<u>Title</u>	<u>£</u>
Prima	1.70
Good Housekeeping	2.20
Cosmopolitan	2.30
Marie Claire	2.30
Essentials	1.70
House Beautiful	1.70
Homes & Ideas	1.70
New Woman	2.10
She	2.10
Elle	2.30
Vogue	2.90
Options	2.00
Woman	1.10
Woman's Own	1.10
Woman's Journal	2.10
More!	1.25
Bella	1.10
Top Sante	1.95
Best	0.99

Table 2: Women's Magazine Titles by Frequency of Publication

<u>Publication</u>	<u>(% of titles) 1994-95</u>
Monthly	58
Weekly	14
Bimonthly	14
Quarterly	10
Others	4

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations / National Readership Survey / *Key Note*

Table 3: Top UK Women's Magazines (Monthly, Bimonthly and Weekly) by Circulation, January to June 1994

Position	Title	1994
1	Take a Break	1,505,069
2	Bella	991,300
3	Women's Weekly	785,604
4	Woman	769,364
5	Woman's Own	757,569
6	Prima	565,048
7	Best	530,642
8	Good Housekeeping	501,654
9	Candis	487,679
10	People's Friend	480,850
11	Chat	486,233
12	Hello	441,656
13	My Weekly	434,031
14	Woman & Home	417,670
15	Cosmopolitan	417,014
16	Marie Claire	398,019
17	More!	393,707
18	Essentials	376,112
19	Women's Realm	361,549
20	Sainsbury's: The Magazine	325,730
21	House Beautiful	320,396
22	Family Circle	302,902
23	Homes & Ideas	293,551
24	Company	268,022
25	New Woman	258,552
26	She	257,223
27	Ideal Home	245,708
28	Looks	225,470
29	Elle	222,864
30	19	193,987
31	Country Living	187,029
32	Vogue	183,439
33	Homes & Gardens	179,651
34	Slimming	170,768
35	Woman's Journal	166,412
36	Options	160,416
37	Top Sante Health & Beauty	152,269
38	The Next Magazine	152,188
39	House & Garden	151,869
40	Living	142,616
41	Clothes Show Magazine	138,819
42	Weight Watchers Magazine	138,695
43	Maternity & Mothercraft	135,780
44	Practical Parenting	125,412
45	Country Homes & Interiors	120,068
46	Slimmer	114,048
47	Mother & Baby	110,638
48	Perfect Home	101,804
49	The Face	100,804

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations/Periodical Publishers Association

Table 4: Top 20 Best-Selling Women's Monthly Magazines in the UK by Circulation, January to June 1994

<u>Title</u>	<u>1994</u>
Prima	565,048
Good Housekeeping	501,654
Candis	487,679
Woman & Home	417,670
Cosmopolitan	417,014
Marie Claire	398,019
Essentials	376,112
Sainsbury's: The Magazine	325,730
House Beautiful	320,396
Family Circle	302,902
Homes & Ideas	293,551
Company	268,022
New Woman	258,552
She	257,223
Ideal Home	245,708
Looks	225,470
Elle	222,864
19	193,987
Country Living	187,029
Vogue	183,439

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations/Periodical Publishers Association

Table 5: Top 15 Best-Selling Women's Magazines in Turkey by Circulation

<u>Title</u>	<u>Circulation -1995 (per month)</u>
Elele	24,485
Cosmopolitan	24,371
Klips	17,292
Form Sante	17,060
Vizyon	7,000
Marie Claire	8,747
Kim	11,618
Kadınca	9,081
Votre Beaute	5,143
She	12,870
Viva	8,393
Hey Girl	18,024
H. Bazaar	6,115
Bella	6,167
Blue Jeans	24,537

(Circulation figures quoted by the publishing companies)

MAIN THEMES

<u>Themes</u>	<i>Kadınca</i>	<i>Kim</i>	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>New Woman</i>
Feminism and Politics	101	114	11	18
Sex and Sexuality	26	31	27	30
Self-Confident and self-determined	10	12	14	17
Employment and Career	30	-	42	29
Family and Marriage	6	9	6	8
Men and Masculinity	4	9*	6	38

* *Kim*'s man's regular section is not included in this category. Each issue of *Kim* devotes approximately fifteen pages to this section.

The Issues of the Magazines Included in the Analysis

<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	Year	<i>New Woman</i>	Year
January	1995	February	1995
April	1995	March	1995
May	1995	April	1995
July	1995	June	1995
August	1995	July	1995
September	1995	August	1995
October	1995	September	1995
November	1995	October	1995
December	1995	November	1995
March	1996	December	1995
May	1996	May	1996
September	1996	September	1996

<i>Kim</i>	Year	<i>Kadınca</i>	Year
January	1995	January	1995
February	1995	February	1995
March	1995	March	1995
April	1995	April	1995
May	1995	May	1995
June	1995	June	1995
July	1995	July	1995
August	1995	August	1995
September	1995	September	1995
November	1995	November	1995
December	1995	December	1995

February, March and June 1995 issues of *Cosmopolitan*, and January and May 1995 issues of *New Woman* were not available at the time of conducting the research. For that reason March, May, September 1996 issues of *Cosmopolitan*, and May and September 1996 issues of *New Woman* are included in the research.

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